THE LATIN POETS

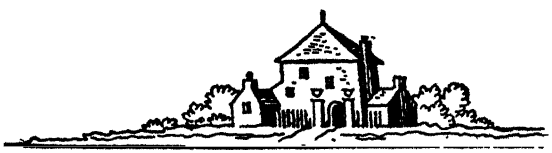


Edited, with an Introduction,
by

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FOR THE right to reprint the copyrighted translations in this volume, the editor is indebted to the following translators and publishers:

Mrs. Wilmon Brewer, for "The Cave of Envy," by Ovid, translated by Brookes More.

Jonathan Cape, Ltd, for "The Snows are Fled," by Horace, translated by A. E. Housman.

Henry Harmon Chamberlin, for Satires 1, 2, 6 and 9, by Horace.

Sir William Hamilton Fyfe, for "On Sleep," by Statius.

Horace Gregory, for Ode 83 by Catullus.

Barklie Henry, for Odes, Book I, 14, 27, and 37, by Horace.

Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., for "The Pure Soul" and "The Timid Maiden," by Horace, translated by William Falconer Murison.

For "Caesar and Pompey" and "Civil War," by Lucan, translated by Edward Ridley.

MCA Management, for "The Snows are Fled," by Horace, translated by A. E. Housman.

Oxford University Press, for "The Sickness" and "The Vision," by Propertius, translated by E. H. W. Meyerstein.

Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., for "The Tale of Kisses," "Love's Return," "The Promise," "Renunciation" and "The Poet's Prayer," by Catullus; "Cornelia Speaks from the Grave," by Propertius; "Narcissus," "Salmacis and Hermaphroditus," "Pyramus and Thisbe," "The Palace of Sleep," "Tarquin's Rape of Lucrece" and "Afternoon Diversions," by Ovid; eleven Epigrams by Martial, translated by F. A. Wright.

The Sewanee Review, for "Beyond the Grave," by Propertius, translated by Kirby F. Smith.

Simpkin, Marshall, Ltd., for translations of Elegies by Propertius by Seymour G. Tremenheere.

The Society of Authors, London, for "The Snows are Fled," by Horace, translated by A. E. Housman.

Alba Warren, for translations of "The Lamp of Love," by Valerius Aedituus and "The Lost Heart," by Quintus Lutatius Catulus.

INTRODUCTION

by FRANCIS R. B. GODOLPHIN

EVER since Chaucer learned much of his trade as a story-teller from his reading of Ovid, English literature has been indebted to the Latin poets. From Chaucer's day until the middle of the sixteenth century this indebtedness came chiefly from reading the original Latin texts. With the Earl of Surrey's translation of the Fourth Book of Virgil's Aeneid in 1548, the classical influence has likewise come through by reading translations. Following Golding's translation of the Metamorphoses of Ovid (1567), translations have appeared in English for the "instruction of the ignorant and pleasure of the learned." Ascham said that "the best translation . . . is an evill imped wing to fly withall," but the stream of translations from the hands of scholars and poets, even poets who versify from translations, testifies to the popularity of the task and the presence of an audience.

This volume has been collected to show something of the nature of Latin poetry, the range of the poets, and the varieties of their influence in English literature.

The Latin poets present a wide variety of subject-matter, ranging from the atomistic materialism of Lucretius to the Stoicism of Seneca. Virgil's effort to present the sweep of history from the fall of Troy to his own day and beyond may be contrasted with Lucan's account of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. In lyric every variety of emotion is expressed, from the most passionate love, through erotic trifles and drinking songs, to patriotic odes such as those in Horace's third book, which provided a measure of inspiration for Milton's patriotic sonnets. In satire a wide variety of human

faults and failings are held up to the light, with tolerant understanding or harsh criticism, depending on the temperament of the writer. In elegy and epigram we find pictures of society, analyses of personal relations, and insights into the workings of the human heart. Vital to all varieties of Latin poetry is the myth, which for us includes much that the Romans called history.

Latin literature is still worth our reading because most of the poets were deeply concerned to communicate their best insights and their deepest thoughts and feelings to the reader in the most effective artistic form possible. This gives Latin poetry an importance far beyond the fact that it provides the means of acquiring the myths and the literary forms which the Romans mostly borrowed from the Greeks.

In the realm of poetic form and technique, it was the Latin poets whose contributions were most considerable in the development of English poetry. Despite efforts to naturalize the actual meters of the Romans, English poetry fortunately developed its own characteristics. However, the attention to detail characteristic of the best Roman poets, and the careful choice of words so notable in Horace and Virgil set a standard of perfection, without leading to imitation of a dead and mechanical sort. In the literary "forms" the Roman influence was strong, and, at least initially provided a framework for English poetic expression. Epic, drama, lyric, elegy, pastoral, and satire were, for the most part, transmitted in the form developed by the Romans, although the Romans only claimed credit for the creation of satire.

When the English Renaissance was arousing men's interests in the dignity and worth of the individual, the Latin poets again provided insights into human nature which had long been ignored. The emphasis of the elegists on love and the satirists' analysis of human vices and foibles were guideposts to a new understanding of human beings. Much that was good in ancient philosophy and science was available in the poets to stimulate speculation. In Renaissance science, Lucretius' *On the Nature of Things* and Manilius' *Astronomica*

were known and studied because they embodied concepts of the natural world which had been largely ignored for centuries.

An interesting indication of the range of Latin poetry can be seen in the changes of taste which placed the emphasis now on one author, now on another, as the readers' needs and interests changed. Throughout the Middle Ages the influence of Virgil and Ovid never wavered even in violently anti-pagan periods. This is largely a result of two circumstances: In the first place, the grammars, by means of which Latin was taught, chiefly used Ovid and Virgil for illustration, and in the second place, there was a general belief that the ancient authors were learned men and that they imparted useful information. If this was not apparent on the surface, it was only necessary to understand the allegory which was assumed to lie beneath the surface in order to learn the improving lesson. Since the fourth Eclogue of Virgil was widely believed to foretell the birth of Christ, it was easy to assume that the epic story of the *Aeneid* imaged forth all human life. So likewise that sophisticated lovers' handbook, Ovid's *Art of Love,* was allegorized for the nuns of Canterbury to teach them their Christian duties.

In the Italian Renaissance Petrarch could find and could use Tibullus, Catullus, and Propertius, the preceptors of love, who provided adjectives, conceits, and themes to enrich his love poetry. So at a later period the English poets drew on the same sources. In the drama it was Seneca, not the Greeks, whose dramatic form and philosophic ideas provided the starting point for the development of English drama. As satire and epigram became popular modes of poetic expression, Horace, Persius, Juvenal, and Martial are the poets to whom the seventeenth and eighteenth-century writers turn.

In some respects Horace is the most consistently influential of the Roman poets. During the late medieval period he was called "Ethicus," and his epistles were read for their moral and philosophical teaching. Dryden and Pope found much that was profitable in him, both in style and content. A host

of lyric poets reflect Horace's utter rightness in their ideals of perfection.

Any reader of English literature must be struck by the pervasiveness of classical mythology as it occurs in that literature. At its worst it is merely ornamental; at its best it may provide imaginative symbols of a higher reality. Mythological tales and mythological allusions still may have imaginative and emotional value, as examples from such poets as Yeats and Eliot would readily show. Although the creation of this mythology is largely of Greek origin, the transmission was chiefly through the Roman poets. They selected symbols from the Greeks with affection and understanding, and furnished the English poets not only with the rich store of myth, but also with techniques of use in rich profusion.

This collection, then, has been designed to provide the English reader with a basis for an understanding of the relation of the Latin poets to English literature. At the same time it endeavors to trace the development of Latin poetry from the first timid attempts at the erotic epigram near the end of the second century before Christ to the anonymous *Vigil of Venus* which, less than three centuries later, echoes many classical themes while at the same time it provides an early statement of the spirit and form which were to characterize the Latin poetry of the Middle Ages.

The choice of the Latin poets to be included in such a collection as this is largely dictated by the interests and enthusiasms of readers and students during the last four centuries. Some authors less known today have been included because of their intrinsic interest. Many classical students would probably like to see others represented. The present editor can only plead the limitations of space. When one seeks to choose the actual poems or passages for inclusion in such a collection, the problem is much more complicated. I have in general chosen to include whole poems, or, in longer works, extended passages instead of seeking out "purple patches." The English reader, it seems to me, has a far better chance of understanding the poetic achievement of

Lucretius, Virgil, or Ovid when he can read a whole book and appreciate the relationship of form and expression to the development of the poet's theme. In addition to the very great problem of choosing the passages in the original, there is the equally difficult problem of the choice of translation. All the translation in this volume are in verse at least, if not poetry. Many prose translations of Latin authors have been published, but often the translator's concern is so largely with the sense that the prose translations seldom contribute to an understanding of the poetry as poetry unless they are read in conjunction with the original, according to the design of the volumes in the Loeb Classical Library. Too often the author of a prose translation is so concerned to obtain literal accuracy that his translation ceases to be English, and becomes a sort of jargon, lacking grammatical form, rhythm, and imagery. For this reason verse translations have been preferred. Frequently they are less accurate, but at least the authors have been concerned to re-create, in some measure, verse form and imagery as essential elements in the translation, just as they are in the originals.

I have not thought it necessary to include notes or a glossary, since in so many instances the passages tell in full the myth or historical event which would be only summarized in a note. In most other instances the person or place is either well known or would be of interest chiefly to specialists who already know the answer.

Since the primary object of these translations is to present the Latin authors, in many instances I have modernized the spellings of the earlier English authors where it seemed to me that such modernization would ease the task of the eye or of the understanding. Where such change might have altered the effect on the ear I have usually allowed the old spelling to stand. Study of the practice of seventeenth-century poets and printers led me to doubt the desirability of seeking to reproduce the text of the earliest printed editions, since the purpose of this volume is simply to present in readable form translations of Latin poets. The translations range from the

seventeenth to the twentieth centuries and should in themselves provide the curious with some insight into the changing taste and style of English verse during this period.

In the brief sketches of the individual poets which follow, I have frequently used approximate dates but have sought to indicate something about the historical context in which the individual poets wrote, and have also sought to suggest something of the nature of the works from which selections have been taken.

If these English verse translations of the Latin poets enable the reader to enjoy some of the beauties of poetic expression which can be re-created from the originals, surely much that is worth while in the thought and feeling will emerge. In any event, many of the myths, and many of the stories which are deeply imbedded in the texture of English literature are accessible in these translations. It is possible that they may show in some measure how the Latin poets succeeded in uniting pleasure and profit for the reader in their works, and why so many of them have achieved enduring fame, a *monumentum aere perennius.*

VALERIUS AEDITUUS
(about 140 B.C.)
QUINTUS LUTATIUS CATULUS
(140-87 B.C.)

LATIN literature does not begin until 240 B.C., about 500 years after the traditional date for the founding of Rome. Dramatic, epic, and invective poetry was written in the century preceding Aedituus but it is only at a relatively late date that the Romans began to experiment with little epigrams on themes of love. We are indebted to Aulus Gellius, an enthusiastic archaizer of the second century A.D., for several little poems which show that the cultivated Romans at the end of the second century B C. were trying to adapt Greek meters and Greek themes to Latin literature. The Hellenistic period in Alexandria had produced a great many erotic epigrams, and the poem of Aedituus has a model by

an anonymous author preserved in the *Greek Anthology*. So likewise *The Lost Heart* of Catulus is a free adaptation of an epigram of Callimachus, a notable figure in Alexandria during the first half of the third century B.C.

These poems are not important in themselves, but they do show that Roman poetry has come of age when, finally, the poets are interested in giving expression to their personal emotions.

CATULLUS
(87-54 B.C.)

As a young man Catullus left his home at Verona for life in the most sophisticated circles of Rome. In a few short years his personal life carried him into the most intense extremes of love and hatred, and in his poetry he ranged from the lyric expressions of his most personal emotions to elaborate experiments in the forms, meters, and subject-matters popularized by the scholar-poets of Hellenistic Alexandria.

The inspiration of the poems which entitle Catullus to a high place among the world's love poets was the utterly fascinating, utterly unscrupulous Clodia, wife of the consul Metellus Celer, and sister of Cicero's bitter enemy Clodius. Under the pseudonym Lesbia, a metrical equivalent for Clodia, the most beautiful, charming, and witty of women is celebrated with youthful enthusiasm and magnificent poetic intensity. Her faithlessness and violence turn the love to torment. Thirty poems written over a period of three years (61-59 B.C) owe their existence to love and hate for Lesbia. Apart from his love for Lesbia, Catullus seems to have been most affected by the death of his brother in the Troad, and the poem on his death is a moving tribute.

English versions of most of these poems are included here from the hands of translators ranging from Crashaw to Horace Gregory.

The greatness of Catullus rests safely on the lyrics, but his influence in English poetry and his place in Latin poetry are closely related to the longer poems. In these he adopts the learned manner of the Alexandrian poets as he translates Callimachus' poem on the lock of Berenice's hair, and in the unique and strange galliambic meter presents Atys, self-castrated in a frenzy of orgiastic religious devotion to the goddess Cybelle.

The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis is on the whole an unsatisfactory "little epic" but it does establish a type of mythological poem in which the myth is told for its own sake, often in the guise of a description of a work of art In it the story of Theseus and Ariadne is told with many beauties of detail, but it is clear that Catullus' gifts do not lie in the field of narrative.

The epithalamium, or marriage song, has been a constant literary genre since the days of Sappho among the Greeks, but Catullus was not content with writing the typical marriage song. The *Nuptial Song* with its chorus of youths and maidens is famous for its imagery which is widely echoed in English from Spenser and Jonson to Tennyson. The *Epithalamium* is more interesting in its blend of Roman elements with the traditional topics of the Greek epithalamium and the dramatic presentation of the scenes most interesting to the poet

LUCRETIUS
(99-55 B.C.)

ST. JEROME'S *Chronicle* supplies practically all the information we have about the life of Lucretius, under an entry for the year 94 B.C.: "Titus Lucretius, the poet, is born He became insane from a love potion and after he had composed, in the intervals of his madness, some books which Cicero afterwards corrected, killed himself in his forty-fourth year." Brief as this statement is, every word is suspect, and it poses many questions, all of them probably insoluble. Donatus tells us that Lucretius died October 15, 55 B.C., the day Virgil assumed the toga of manhood, and in a letter written in 54 B.C., Cicero alludes to "poems of Lucretius." Apart from this fragmentary information, for practically a century after his death, Lucretius and his work seem to be cloaked in a conspiracy of silence, except as we see his influence in Virgil.

On the Nature of Things brings us face to face with a remarkable literary achievement, and with a profound and brilliant mind. Lucretius here planned, and almost carried to completion, a didactic poem to present the Epicurean interpretation of life and nature. A passionate lover of truth, he was desperately eager to free mankind from the fetters of superstition and ignorance. The tyranny of religion could, he believed, be removed from human affairs by an exposition of physical laws based on the atomic

theory of Epicurus. He argued passionately to demonstrate the material nature of a physical world in which the fear of death should have no place and where the gods exist but have no possible concern with man and matter. The astonishing fact is that, without a true scientific method, Lucretius at least hinted at many important physical discoveries of modern times and that his physical theory was superior to any which existed up to the seventeenth century.

For Lucretius, his message to mankind is primary and the claims of poetry come second, but so passionate is his feeling and so ardent his imagination that even intractable scientific material is often transmuted into poetry, and many passages rise to lofty feeling expressed in the stately and sonorous roll of the hexameter. Lucretius' choice of the hexameter instead of the native Saturnian, and his mastery of it as a vehicle of poetic expression, created an instrument adapted to great heights and subtle tones of emotion.

VIRGIL
(70-19 B.C.)

VIRGIL, or Vergil, was born in the tiny village of Andes near Mantua on the fifteenth of October, 70 B.C. His father, a small freeholder, provided him with a good education, first at Cremona, then Mantua, and later at Rome. Little is known of him until the period after the battle of Philippi (42 B.C.), when the victorious triumvirs confiscated for their armies Virgil's farm, along with other land of cities which had taken the Republican side. Pollio, the administrator of the district, not only saw to it that Virgil was compensated by an estate in Campania, but also introduced him to the circle of Octavian (later Augustus).

About four years later the *Eclogues* were published in their present form, and from that time to the present Virgil has always had a place among the great poets. It is true that the *Eclogues* mark only the beginning of Virgil's development and that their form is a close and careful imitation of Theocritus. But even in these poems something of Virgil's human sympathy and insight emerges to suggest a new language of poetry unlike anything which had preceded it. His use of allegory may have been pernicious in its ultimate effects; certainly the supposed prophecy of the birth of Christ in the fourth Eclogue fostered wide reading of

Virgil, but led to profound misunderstanding of him. On the other hand, to see in the *Eclogues* only echoes of an already weary pastoral tradition is to miss the magical art of Virgil which transforms traditional subject-matter and forms into poetry.

Virgil was thoroughly at home and happy in the composition of the four *Georgics,* which occupied him for some years after the *Eclogues.* If the subject was in some measure dictated by the desire of Augustus and Maecenas to foster agriculture, it was congenial to Virgil and on it he lavished the mature perfection of his art. As Addison said, "The *Georgic* has all the perfection that can be expected in a poem written by the greatest poet in the flower of his age, when his invention was ready, his imagination warm, his judgment settled, and all his faculties in their full vigor and maturity."

Virgil's greatest poem, the *Aeneid,* is unequal in its parts and no choice of selections can do justice to the master design; nevertheless the passages included in this volume suggest the poem's dramatic and narrative quality, and above all Virgil's profound sympathy and pity for the human predicament, which is the secret of his greatness. There are nationalistic elements in the story of Dido and Aeneas, and in the underworld of the sixth book, but the "tears of things" lead Virgil to touch the deepest springs of feeling with a strange pathos which is his alone.

Whatever the *Aeneid* may have lacked of perfection in Virgil's eyes (on his deathbed he asked that it be destroyed as incomplete) is more than atoned for by its nobility and grandeur. The *Aeneid* exercised an unparalleled influence over subsequent Latin literature. In Christian literature from St. Augustine to Dante, Virgil was a poet sacred and apart. In English only the rebellion of the romantic movement has challenged the supremacy of the *Aeneid* and damned it for "artificiality."

No translation can re-create the verbal and metrical effects of Virgil's hexameters. The reader may wonder at the choice of Dryden as the sole translator of the poetry of Virgil which has attracted so many English translators during the last four centuries. However, Dryden seems to unite more qualities suited to the task than any other poet. His character and interests as a poet, and the atmosphere of hospitality to Virgil engendered by the tastes and interests of his age were conducive to good translation. As Dryden said, "I have endeavored to make Virgil speak

such English as he would himself have spoken, if he had been born in England, and in this present age."

HORACE
(65-8 B.C.)

HORACE coined a phrase, *aurea mediocritas,* the golden mean (or is it golden mediocrity?), which, by taking advantage of the ambivalence, may profitably be taken as the key to the man and his works.

No other lyric poet with so limited an emotional range has delighted so much of mankind over so long a period. The *Odes* of Horace have been the school-book of Europe; successive generations of school boys have assimilated the simple ideas of Horace and the beautiful phrases of his *Odes* and carried them through a lifetime. From poet to businessman the temptation to try one's hand at verse translation of Horace is irresistible, where no other poet seems to arouse interest, much less the desire to imitate or reproduce.

With a modest fund of ideas and an unstrained meticulousness of workmanship Horace achieved a consistent rightness, an incredible felicity in the harmony of idea and expression which made his odes inimitable. In fact this quality really put a stop to any further development of the lyric in Latin and the *Odes* were left to await the translation, imitation, paraphrase, and parody of English writers.

In rather different terms the *Satires* show many of the same qualities Pedestrian, as he says, in metrical form and diction, the *Satires* present our common human nature with perception and quiet humor. Never roused to the bitterness of a Juvenal, Horace quietly punctures pretensions of any sort wherever he comes upon them, and he gives the impression of coming upon them in himself or others without the labor of seeking them out. So likewise throughout his works, he enunciates what may be nicknamed his philosophical views, Stoic or Epicurean, as if he had happened upon them at an opportune moment and thought his reader might be interested in the point of view.

The *Art of Poetry,* as the *Epistle to the Pisos* is generally known, was probably intended to be an equally casual and dis-

cursive discussion of poetry, chiefly tragedy. Unfortunately it was largely taken as an authoritative treatise and had far too much influence in the modern world. Along with many reflections of Horace's experience and good sense it seemed to provide an authoritative theory of drama in easily accessible form, and, consequently, because of its presumed authority, it has been pernicious beyond its deserts

For the life of Horace it is enough to know that he never forgot his gratitude to his father for a virtuous upbringing and good education, and that, after brief service in the Republican army in a rank beyond his capacity, he supported himself by a small civil-service post until Virgil introduced him to Maecenas, who saw to it that his modest needs were supplied thereafter by the famous Sabine farm. Wealth, power, and position were alien to his needs and desires; a poet's fame was his only goal. Wine and women he enjoyed with an extreme moderation. Song was his passion, and he succeeded in creating a body of lyrics of unexampled beauty which may still work a miracle with the attentive reader, be he aesthete or Philistine.

TIBULLUS
(54-19 B.C.)

GENERAL taste has found Tibullus a favorite among the elegists. "Pure and fine," as Quintilian says, his poems reveal a gentleness and sincerity which inspire affection, although he is never exciting in subject-matter, and never striking in technique.

A shy man, incapable of pushing himself, he evidently enjoyed his friendships in the quiet circle of Messalla and won the esteem of Horace. Despite his hatred for war and his enjoyment of the peaceful pursuits of the country, he had served under Messalla in Aquitania and was setting out for the Orient with him as a staff member when he fell ill at Corcyra. Once he had safely returned to his beloved Delia, however, neither necessity nor inclination led him into the active life of politics and affairs at Rome.

Affairs with Delia, Nemesis, and the youth Marathus provide subject-matter for most of Tibullus' elegies, and the easy flow of the verse and the seemingly effortless transitions enable the reader

to enjoy the charm and sweetness of the poet's personality along with instruction in the joys and snares of love.

SULPICIA
(about 25 B.C.)

A FORTUNATE chance has preserved six poems by Sulpicia, a niece of Messalla, in the volume which contains the elegies of Tibullus. Tibullus himself seems to have written a number of poems for her tongue-tied young lover, Cerinthus, and these serve as a preface to the forty lines in which Sulpicia has succeeded in conveying a vivid impression of her personality. Her poems show straightforward simplicity without self-consciousness or affectation. In the absence of other poetry written by Roman women, much has been made of Sulpicia's feminine Latinity, but what is really striking is her ability to express her regret at running away from complete surrender to her lover, or her fury at the report of a low-born rival. *The Avowal* is the last of the series, written just after the consummation of her love, and vividly expresses her joy and exaltation.

PROPERTIUS
(48-16 B.C.)

PROPERTIUS is, and always has been, a favorite poet among a minority of readers for whom his rich sound effects, striking imagery, and lavish ornament have an appeal unlike that of any other Latin poet. He is not the modern imagist that Ezra Pound would make him, but his unusual combinations of image, and the erratic development of emotions which nevertheless must have had clear relationships for the self-centered, almost neurotic young poet, have tempted modern scholars to endless rearrangements of his poems. The goal in each instance has been to make him more regular, more "classical," less difficult to fit into preconceived patterns of technique and thought for a poet of the Augustan period.

Although the famous elegy on the death of Cornelia and a few other elegies show that he could write poetry with insight and sympathetic understanding where his own emotions were not

directly involved, his relations with the fascinating older woman whom he calls Cynthia provide the essence of what is unusual and modern in his poetry and his life. The Rome of Augustus expected the elegiac poet to treat themes of love primarily, and to ornament the treatment with learned allusions. It did not expect to come upon a poet with the complex ideals and motives which could torture the resources of the Latin language and the verse form of the elegiac couplet with odd usages, assonance, alliteration, and more rhyme than any other Latin poet. English verse translations may exploit one or another of these characteristics, but Propertius remains a bundle of inconsistencies.

His mother apparently brought Propertius from Assisi to Rome when he was about ten years old, she died shortly after he completed his schooling and just before he met Cynthia, when he was still only about nineteen. Though the name Cynthia is a pseudonym (Apuleius says her name was Hostia), the woman Propertius pictures in his poetry is no shadowy ideal. She is sophisticated and passionate but generous and idealistic. Intensely human and free of the stock characteristics of the gold-digger mistress, she is the most real and the most interesting of the elegiac heroines. It is easy to see why she dominated Propertius, and why, without her, literary reputation and the desire for fame provided no antidote for the poet's morbid preoccupation with his own death, which seems to have followed hers at no long interval.

OVID
(43 B.C.-18 A.D.)

Ovid's father sent him from the family home at Sulmo to Rome, and later Athens, to obtain a legal education, but Ovid swiftly turned from the law to poetry, the career of his own choice, despite its practical drawbacks. With equal celerity he divorced the wife picked for him by his father on the grounds that she was "neither worthy nor useful," and plunged into the gay life of Rome, recommended to the smart set by his wit and cleverness.

The commentator of his day, he presented most of his findings in the form of love elegies on themes from seduction to abortion, and distilled his professorial wisdom into the witty and comprehensive *Art of Love.*

In 8 A D he was banished by the Emperor Augustus to bleak Tomi on the shores of the Black Sea for some offense, literary, personal, or political, and moaned his life away for his last ten years in a long series of poetic efforts to regain favor, obtain pardon, or in some way escape the dreary life on the shores of the Euxine.

An interesting figure and a technically gifted poet, one might be tempted to say, but scarcely important because he had no depth of vision and no profundity of insight. Yet Ovid must be counted a major figure in the making of modern literature. His ability to tell a story, as shown in the vast number of tales in the fifteen books of the *Metamorphoses,* and his keen interest in psychology, chiefly feminine, which runs through the *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides,* helped to bring about the shift from medieval to modern literature.

Equally important, Ovid is the storehouse of classical mythology The Greeks were the creators of a mythology which has been more potent in Western art than any other, but Ovid was the transmitter who cast the myths in a form which could be read with ease and enjoyment. Although medieval allegorizing and moralizing often completely confused the understanding of the reader, the story remained to charm and delight successive generations.

MANILIUS
(? 20 B.C.-? 25 A.D.)

MANILIUS, the author of the *Astronomica,* evidently wrote during the last years of Augustus and the early years of Tiberius. Although not a great poet, he has real power in thought and style, and by no means deserves the oblivion into which he has fallen. The extant five books are no mere adaptation of Greek originals or a repetition of astronomical commonplaces for a Roman audience, but show sincere feeling and real power of thought in such passages as his justification of the study of abstract science, the power of the tiny human eye to take in the immensity of the heavens, and the rule of fate.

PERSIUS
(34-62 A.D.)

PERSIUS died at twenty-eight, leaving a little book of six satires which were published through the good offices of friends. These pieces, written under the influence of that Stoicism which sought to maintain a higher life amidst the corruption of Nero's age, show a refined and uncommon literary gift. It is true that the world of Persius is largely a world of books; the *Satires* of Horace are more familiar to him than the Rome of his own day. Nonetheless, within the field of his own experience he shows keen observation and delicate power of portraiture, and among the Roman satirists he has earned a place as a model in the literary genre.

SENECA
(? 4 B.C.-65 A.D.)

THE career of Seneca is one of startling contrasts; born in Cordova, he became a well-known figure at court in Rome under Caligula; banished by Claudius at the instigation of Messalina, he was recalled by the influence of Agrippina and made tutor to Nero. Vastly influential, powerful and wealthy as Nero's administrator of the empire, he committed suicide by royal order on a pretext of conspiracy. To his deathbed he brought a strange mixture of helplessness and heroism. A Stoic philosopher, he summoned all the resources of the rhetorical manner to voluminous treatises on ethics and morality; as a tragic writer, faults of rhetoric and undramatic structure are often atoned for by truly fine lyric passages. Since he provided the only extant Latin tragedies, Seneca exerted a great effect upon the early drama of the sixteenth century in England. Though the effect may have contained more of harm than benefit, in many individual passages the literary and rhetorical expression of Seneca's philosophic positions still has the power to move the reader.

LUCAN
(39-65 A.D.)

SENECA'S nephew, Lucan, led a brief life of feverish activity. A sensation at twenty-one for his public recitation in praise of Nero, he speedily obtained political advancement, and as swiftly found his poetic career checked by the resentment of the artist-emperor. Seeking to put his republican theories into practice, he joined the conspiracy of Piso against Nero, but weakly betrayed his accomplices, including his mother, when he was arrested. The same gaudy character is apparent in his only work which has been preserved, the *Pharsalia.* His thought and ideas are not sustained, the civil wars are not presented from a consistent point of view, and the characters of the epic are not human beings but vehicles for resounding rhetoric. There is, however, a real brilliance in individual passages. Marlowe translated the first book into blank verse, and later poets have echoed his phrases and rhetorical excesses, though few would join with Shelley in speaking of "Lucan, by his death approved."

STATIUS
(40-95 A.D.)

STATIUS, most eminent of the poets of his day, pursued an energetic course of epic composition during the reign of Domitian, to whom he dedicated his *Thebaid,* an interesting and even charming reworking of a theme worn threadbare centuries before his time. So successful was the attempt that he was highly esteemed and much read during the Middle Ages. Dante accepted an unhistorical medieval tradition of his conversion to Christianity and placed him in Purgatory. The poem was constantly quoted in the eighteenth century, and both Pope and Gray translated portions of it into English verse.

The excellences of Statius as a poet appear more clearly, however, in the *Silvae,* a collection of shorter pieces from which the poem *On Sleep* is taken. In a period of rhetorical excesses his taste preserves him from any great extravagances, and in this short poem suggests that he had the innate poetic sensitivity to strike out in a manner new to ancient poetry.

JUVENAL
(55-135 A.D.)

THE savage and brutal satires of Juvenal show forth a raw rage and disgust with man and society that leave a stamp on the imagination of the reader, however much he may deprecate the lack of taste. As the third model for moderns among the Roman satirists, he provided Johnson with congenial material in *The City* and the *Vanity of Human Wishes* though no other satirist, even a Swift, could reach such remorseless heights of fierce indignation in frustrated admiration for goodness and innocence. Misogynists are still indebted, consciously or unconsciously, to *The Women* for the themes and violent rhetorical indictments of the causes of all men's woes. Rome at the beginning of the second century A D. had much to annoy and disgust the observer, and Juvenal seems to have taken a perverse satisfaction in driving every fault and every flaw into the consciousness of his reader The high-pitched fervor with which Juvenal attacked each subject in turn finally serves to warn us of the danger of listening too long to a disappointed idealist, and inspires gratitude for the retiring and scholarly satire of a Persius, or the urbane and amused sophistication of Horace's commentary on human vices and foibles

As a literary form the Romans claimed satire as their own invention; in Horace or Juvenal the disappointed and disillusioned can still find a congenial spirit with whom to view man's sad inadequacy.

MARTIAL
(40-104 A.D.)

MARTIAL, the author of twelve books of *Epigrams,* has preserved for posterity a vivid picture of daily life at Rome in the first century A.D. A native of Bilbilis in Spain he brought to the Roman scene animation and a pungent wit which enabled him to mirror the scene—vice, viciousness, brutality, obscenity, and flattery—practically without moral feeling save for a certain distaste for hypocrisy. Of his own epigrams he says, "A few good, some indifferent, the greater number bad." Since much of the

material most valuable for its reflection of Roman life is of little interest as poetry, and despite the influence of the short "pointed" epigrams on subsequent stylists, it has seemed desirable to present as examples of his work some of the poems with grace and real feeling in preference to poems of obscenity and obsequious flattery.

HADRIAN
(76-138 A.D.)

THE EMPEROR HADRIAN found time to publish speeches, write an autobiography, works on grammar and also poems. He was equally at home in Greek and Latin and perhaps favored Greek as a literary language. The address *To His Soul* is certainly of no great importance poetically, but does serve to indicate the sort of poetic trifles cultivated Romans turned their hands to and, like the *Vigil of Venus,* points toward the verse of the Middle Ages.

ANONYMOUS

THE *Pervigilium Veneris,* the Virgil of Venus, probably belongs to the second century A.D., when Hadrian revived and encouraged the spring festival of Venus Genetrix. It is certainly a striking example of sentiment and style peculiar to medieval times. Its quantitative rhythm coincides with the natural accent of the words, it is full of assonances, its grammatical structure points forward to the changes to come, and above all, its conclusion sounds the knell of the old classical literature and the old classical world, whose spring was to come never again.

Princeton University
May, 1949



VALERIUS AEDITUUS

Love's Light

PHILEROS, why take a light?
We have no need of one, you know:
Just as we are, so let us go,
For after all our hearts are bright.

And angry winds or sheeted rains
Can put a little flambeau out;
But Venus' fire none can rout
Except herself, for all their pains.

Q. LUTATIUS CATULUS

The Lost Heart

My HEART has run away from me
Again, I think, to Theotimus.
It must be so: at least I know
My love could find a refuge there.
But still it's strange, since I forbade
The man to take the rascal in:
I'll hunt it here; yet wait! I fear
The two of us are in its snare.
Ah, Venus, what am I to do?
Advice can only come from you.

GAIUS VALERIUS CATULLUS

To Lesbia

HIM RIVAL to the gods I place,
Him loftier yet, if loftier be,
Who, Lesbia, sits before thy face,
Who listens and who looks on thee;

Thee smiling soft. Yet this delight
Doth all my sense consign to death;
For when thou dawnest on my sight,
Ah, wretched! flits my labouring breath.

My tongue is palsied. Subtly hid
Fire creeps me through from limb to limb:
My loud ears tingle all unbid·
Twin clouds of night mine eyes bedim.

Ease is my plague: ease makes thee void,
Catullus, with these vacant hours,
And wanton: ease that hath destroyed
Great kings, and states with all their powers.

Kisses

COME and let us live, my dear,
Let us love and never fear
What the sourest fathers say:
Brightest Sol that dies to-day
Lives again as blithe to-morrow;
But if we dark sons of sorrow
Set, O then, how long a night
Shuts the eyes of our short light!

Then let amorous kisses dwell
On our lips, begin and tell
A thousand, and a hundred score,
An hundred and a thousand more,
Till another thousand smother
That, and that wipe off another.
Thus at last when we have numbred
Many a thousand, many a hundred,
We'll confound the reckoning quite,
And lose ourselves in wild delight:
While our joys so multiply
As shall mock the envious eye.

The Tale of Kisses

How MANY kisses are enow
From you, and more? Pray would you know?
Then count the grains of Libyan sand
In fair Cyrene's fertile land,
Where sultry Ammon has his shrine
And ancient Batt his tomb divine.
Count up the stars that in the silent night
Look down to see love's stolen sweet delight.
Then, and then only, will you know
How many kisses are enow,
And more, from your ambrosial mouth,
To satisfy Catullus' drouth
And to appease your lover's madness
Dispersing all his care and sadness.
So many that no tongue their count may tell
Or put upon our love base envy's spell.

Lesbia's Sparrow

SPARROW, pet of the lady of my love, who
Will with thee toy, will in her bosom nurse thee,
Her forefinger resign to thy caressings,
And provoke thee to peck at it with fury,
When she is minded, that lady whom I dote on,
Pretty tricks to play, all maddeningly charming,
Finding balm so in this for her emotion,
Else too tense, I believe, for her endurance.
Oh, like her, that I might with thee make pastime,
Ease the pangs so that agitate and rend me!
Dear then wert thou to me, as in the legend
Was to the swift-footed maid the golden apple,
Which ungirdled her zone so long unyielding.

Elegy on Lesbia's Sparrow

LOVES and Graces mourn with me,
Mourn, fair youths, where'er ye be!
Dead my Lesbia's sparrow is,
Sparrow, that was all her bliss,
Than her very eyes more dear;
For he made her dainty cheer,
Knew her well, as any maid
Knows her mother, never strayed
From her bosom, but would go
Hopping round her to and fro,
And to her, and her alone,
Chirrup'd with such pretty tone.
Now he treads that gloomy track,
Whence none ever may come back.
Out upon you, and your power,
Which all fairest things devour,

Orcus' gloomy shades, that e'er
Ye took my bird that was so fair!
Ah, the pity of it! Thou
Poor bird, thy doing 'tis, that now
My loved one's eyes are swoll'n and red,
With weeping for her darling dead.

On Lesbia's Inconstancy

My mistress says, there's not a man
Of all the many that she knows,
She'd rather wed than me, not one,
Though Jove himself were to propose.

She says so;—but what woman says
To him who fancies he has caught her,
'Tis only fit it should be writ
In air or in the running water.

Love's Return

Where can there be more happiness than this,
When to desire there comes unlooked for bliss?
Dearer than gold, my Lesbia, to me
The vision of your loveliness to see.
My eager hopes had almost died away,
When you returned. O happy, happy day!
No boon more great by God has e'er been given,
No man more blest than I lives 'neath wide heaven.

The Promise

You said our love should be a thing of joy
And last for ever. May the words, I pray,

Be promise pledged in truth without alloy,
And your own heart confirm the words you say;
That so through life we travel hand in hand
Together joined by affection's golden band.

Comparison

Most beautiful in many eyes
 Is Quinctia, and in mine
Her shape is tall, and straight withal,
 And her complexion fine.

These single charms of form and face
 I grant that she can show,
But all the concentrated grace
 Of "beautiful," oh no!

For nowhere in her can you find
 That subtle voiceless art,
That something which delights the mind,
 And satisfies the heart.

But Lesbia's beautiful, I swear,
 And for herself she stole
The charms most rare of every fair,
 To frame a perfect whole.

Lesbia Speaks

Lesbia speaks evil of me with her husband near and he (damned idiot) loves to hear her.
Chuckling, the fool is happy, seeing nothing, understanding nothing.
If she forgetting me fell silent, her heart would be his alone, content and peaceful;

but she raves, spitting hatred upon me, all of which carries this meaning:
I am never out of her mind, and what is more, she rises in fury against me
with words that make her burn, her blood passionate for me.

Inference

LESBIA for ever on me rails
To talk of me she never fails.
Now, hang me, but for all her art,
I find that I have gained her heart.
My proof is this: I plainly see
The case is just the same with me;
I curse her every hour sincerely,
Yet, hang me, but I love her dearly.

Love's Madness

NONE could ever say that she,
Lesbia! was so loved by me;
Never, all the world around,
Faith so true as mine was found.
If no longer it endures,
(Would it did!) the fault is yours.
I can never think again
Well of you: I try in vain.
But, be false, do what you will,
Lesbia! I must love you still.

The Idol Shattered

YOU TOLD me, Lesbia, once, that you
For your Catullus only cared,

That, though imperial Jove might sue,
My empire should by none be shared.

I loved you then with love beyond
The transient flush of passion wild;
Ay, with a tenderness as fond,
As binds the parent to the child.

I know you now. Alas! and though
Your fall, your fickleness I spurn,
Yet, can I not forget you, no!
But with a wilder passion burn.

How this can be so, you inquire.
'Tis that thy very shamelessness
But fans the fire of base desire,
Although it makes me love the less.

Love That's Merely a Madness

So LOVED has woman never been
As thou hast been by me,
Nor lover yet was ever seen
So true as I to thee.

But cruel, cruel Lesbia, thou
Hast by thy falsehood wrought
Such havoc in my soul, and now
So madly 'tis distraught,

'Twould prize thee not, though thou shouldst grow
All pure and chaste as ice;
Nor could it cease to love thee, though
Besmirched with every vice.

Love's Unreason

I HATE and love—the why I cannot tell,
But by my tortures know the fact too well.

Renunciation

POOR, poor Catullus, from this folly cease.
Count what is lost as lost, and rest in peace.
'Tis true the sun for you once brightly shone,
But those fair days and all their joys are gone,
When you would follow where she led the way
And both were of one mind in lovers' play,
She whom you loved with such fidelity
As never was and ne'er again will be.
Ah, then your sun, Catullus, brightly shone;
To-day she will not, and your reign is done.
So match her mood, nor follow if she fly;
Be firm, endure, yield not to misery.

Farewell, false darling. I will steel my heart
Nor seek in favours grudged to have a part.
And thou wilt grieve one day when loved by none
Thou shalt be left uncourted and alone.
Farewell. What life, I wonder, waits for thee?
Whom wilt thou welcome and his mistress be?
Who by thy side will know a lover's bliss
And gaze upon thy charms? Whom wilt thou kiss
And bite his lips withal?—Nay, nay, refrain:
Be firm, Catullus, and like rock remain.

The Poet's Prayer

If in remembrance aught there be of pleasure,
When a man knows that he has played his part,
And never used in love a cheating measure,
Nor sworn false oaths to beguile a trusting heart,
Then e'en this love which seems so thankless now
Will on you yet some share of joy bestow.

For every deed and word of loving kindness
By you, Catullus, has been said and done;
Though wasted on a wanton in your blindness,
No need of grateful service have they won.
Cease then with grief to vex yourself in vain
And put an end at last to all your pain.
Forbear, while heaven frowns, to fume and fret.
Steel your firm courage to escape her sway.
" 'Tis hard," you say, "so quickly to forget."
'Tis hard; but with a will there is a way.
Here is your chance: this victory you must win:
Whether you can or no, the attempt begin.

Ye gods, 'tis yours to pity: in death's hour
To bring salvation you alone avail.
If I have cleanly lived, then use your power
And free me from this pestilential bale,
Whose deadly torpor seems on me to press
And robs my days of all their happiness.

I do not ask that she should love me true
Or become chaste—for that can never be.
But if some wage for service done is due,
Then, O ye gods, fulfil this prayer for me.
Rid me of this foul sickness, and restore
The health of mind that I possessed of yore.

Farewell to Lesbia

DEAR comrades who with me would go
Should I to distant India roam,
Where Eastern shores are buffeted
By ocean's foam.

Parthians, Hyrcani, Arabs mild,
And Sacae you would face with me
And that swart race whose sevenfold Nile
Colours the sea.

Or cross the towering Alps to find
The Britons whom no man could tame,
And Gallic Rhine, memorials now
Of Caesar's fame.

Prepared are you alike to share
In all that shall be sent by Fate;
So bear a message to my girl,
These words of hate.

Bid her farewell and let her keep
The legion of her paramours
And careless break their strength, to fill
Her idle hours.

Nor think at all of my poor love
Which by her sin lies all forlorn
Like the field blossoms that a plough
Has passed and torn.

Consolation

If living sorrows any boon
Unto the silent grave can give,
When sad remembrances revive
Old loves and friendships fugitive,
She sorrows less she died so soon
Than joys your love is still alive.

On His Brother's Death

By ways remote and distant waters sped,
Brother, to thy sad grave-side am I come,
That I may give the last gifts to the dead,
And vainly parley with thine ashes dumb:
Since she who now bestows and now denies
Hath ta'en thee, hapless brother, from mine eyes.
But lo! these gifts, the heirlooms of past years,
Are made sad things to grace thy coffin shell;
Take them, all drenched with a brother's tears,
And, brother, for all time, hail and farewell!

Friendship and Love

The plaintive letter, Mallius, thou hast sent,
While low by fate and sudden misery bent,
That bids me raise thee from the whelming wave,
And rescue from the threshold of the grave;
Since mighty Venus lets not slumber shed
Its lulling influence o'er thy lonely bed,
Nor all the verse, our tuneful sire's bequests,
Can soothe thy mind where anguish never rests;
That hapless letter still my bosom cheers,

Those lines are dear, though written with thy tears:
For, ah! they speak thy love, and bid me send
Verse from the bard, affection from the friend.
Think not I wish my duty to disown
To the first friend my life has ever known;
But, Mallius, learn my own unhappy state,
Learn in how rough a sea of troublous fate
I sink o'erwhelmed; nor ask from hopeless woe
For gifts the happy only can bestow.

When the white robe of man I first assumed,
When youth's light spring with every pleasure bloomed,
Free were my sports, nor did that goddess spare
Who blends the bitter sweets of lovers' care.
But all these joys my brother's death has torn
From the lone wretch whom he hath left to mourn.
Brother, thy death has wrapt my days in gloom
And all our house lies buried in thy tomb:
Thy friendship my young life with pleasures fed
And every pleasure now with thee is dead.

His early fate has from my bosom chased
All former joys and all the mind can taste.
They cry not—"Shame, Catullus, should be known
To droop and linger in Verona's town,
While every gallant here in turn is taken,
To warm the bed that now he has forsaken."

No, Mallius, call it not disgrace or shame,
For keenest misery is the fitter name.
Forgive me then, if thou shalt ask in vain
The gifts that sorrow from myself has ta'en,
No store of writers here their fires infuse,
To guide my taste and cheer my drooping Muse:
Few favourite volumes serve to fill the void
And chase the gloom of leisure unemployed.
Rome holds my home, my comfort, and my care,

And life is only life when I am there.
Then think not fretful envy prompts my part,
Or gratitude is irksome to my heart;
Forced to refuse thee each request of thine
Gifts I had sent unasked, had they been mine.

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How Allius helped me in the days gone by,
Ye Muses, ne'er shall fade from memory.
Never shall careless time its gloom extend
O'er the dear memory of so true a friend.
To you I speak his name, do ye unfold
To countless hosts the praises I have told.
Let this time-honoured verse for ever tell
To future days of him I loved so well;
And when at length, alas, his aged head
Shall rest inurned among the noble dead,
Wider and wider still his praise proclaim
When all of him that lives shall be his fame.
Thus, by its theme immortal, shall my page
Live still perused in every distant age,
Nor spider ever venture to profane
With lazy web my laudatory strain.

Ye know how Venus false my life oppressed,
With what destroying flame she scorched my breast,
Hot as the fires that Etna's crater fill,
Or Malia's springs that boil near Oeta's hill,
With wasting tears my eyes were dim and weak
And sorrow's tide for ever bathed my cheek.
As, springing on some mountain's airy throne,
The crystal streamlet from the mossy stone
In headlong haste leaps down the sloping glen
Across the high-road, to wayfaring men
A blest alleviation of their toil
When arid heat has cracked the fevered soil;
As, when through storms the sailor long has prayed

To Pollux now, and now for Castor's aid,
Soft breathes the favouring air and calms the sea,
Such Allius was, such help and bliss to me.
He opened wide the field and made a way
Where we might sport together in fond play;
He bounteous placed me in his rich abode
Whose mistress on our love her smiles bestowed.
That house my goddess blest: that mansion bore
Her graceful foot upon its tell-tale floor;
There oft her creaking sandal, sweet to hear,
Foretold the fair one to her lover's ear.
Thus erst, while love warmed every tender thought,
Her husband's home Laodamia sought.
Too eager bride! No victim led to die
Had yet propitious made the gods on high—
Thy power, dread Nemesis, hath e'er suppressed
All hopes unsanctioned by the heavens' behest:
Hapless, who grasp, unless the gods approve,
The proffered gift of glory, wealth, or love!—
Soon did she learn how keen the thirsty fane
Desires the sacred blood of victims slain,
Forced from her parting husband's neck to tear
The close embrace that longed to linger there;
Ere yet two winters in their length of nights
Had glutted passion with its own delights,
Or taught the bride a strength, how hard to give,
To lose the mate she loved and yet to live.
The Fates knew well his doom not distant far
If the bold chieftain sought the Trojan war.

For then had Troy by stealth of Helen's charms
Roused 'gainst herself the Kings of Greece to arms.
Troy, baleful impious Troy! the common grave
Of Europe's warriors and of Asia's brave!
Troy, whose vast ruin the sad ashes boasts
Of wisdom, valour, and unnumbered hosts!
Troy, where my brother died, untimely torn

From the lone wretch whom he has left to mourn!
Alas, his eyes are closed in lasting gloom:
Brother, our house lies with thee in the tomb.
Thy friendship my young life with pleasures fed,
And all my pleasures now with thee are dead.
Not 'mid ancestral tombs for ages traced,
Nor with the urns of kindred ashes placed;
But hateful Troy, Troy's melancholy plains
Hold in ungenial soil thy loved remains.

To Troy then hastening the assembled band
Of Grecian youths had left their native land,
To burst on Paris in fair Helen's bower
And rouse him from beside his paramour,
Nor let his crime its lawless rapture shed
On days of quiet or a peaceful bed.
'Twas in that hour that he, beloved too well,
Thine heart-dear spouse Laodamia, fell:
And wild despair with overwhelming flow
Hurried thee down the deep abyss of woe.
Less deep that gulf described in Grecian lands,
Where Pheneus flows and high Cyllenë stands,
Which poured the waste of waters through its drain
And gave to men the firm and fertile plain.
Amphitryon's falsely-fathered son, they say,
Through the broad mountain clove its lofty way,
When, by a worthless lord's command employed,
His darts the birds of Stymphalus destroyed:
'Twas for a throne in heaven his task he plied,
And blooming Hebë for his virgin bride.

How vast, how deep that gulf upon whose soil,
A slaving god had spent a lengthened toil!
More vast the love that warmed thy bridal vows,
More deep thy sorrow for thy plighted spouse.
Not to the sire so dear, when grey with years,
The late-born son an only daughter rears,

Who, soon as first he draws the vital air,
Named by his grandsire for his only heir,
Blasts the fond hopes that hungry kinsmen fed
And drives the vultures from his hoary head.
Not e'en so much the tender sports of love
Please the soft partner of the snowy dove,
Who still with fire, to which her mate's is weak,
Plucks ceaseless kisses with a clinging beak.
(Never can love to manly breasts impart
The doting ardour of the female heart)
With all their fires thy glowing passion vied
When first the fair-haired warrior claimed his bride.

Thus erst, thy bright compeer in love and charms,
Light of my life, my darling sought my arms;
While Cupid in soft saffron vest arrayed
Hovering on sportive wing around her played.
What though at times she bless some other youth
And cast her smiles alike upon us both?
I know I cannot her sole lover be,
And must with grace endure her frailty.
I am not of the jealous husband kind;
If she but be discreet, I will be blind.
Vex not your lives, my friends, with jealous pain;
Juno—if such compare be not profane—
Imperial Juno knew the lusts of Jove,
Still daily false, yet viewed him still with love.
Love, independent love, no care requires,
No chilling sanction of intrusive sires;
For by no father's formal conduct brought,
No Syrian odours filled the home she sought:
But on that wondrous night, all nights above,
She gave at once the fullest gift of love,
In that same night bestowed, in that possessed,
Warm from her lawful bed and husband's breast.
Enough that I that night of rapture passed,
Enough, had e'en that rapture been my last.

This gift of verse—'tis all I can—I send
To pay the duties of a grateful friend:
This grateful verse shall keep thy name and praise
Known and revered through all succeeding days.
To thee the gods will every boon supply
Which Themis' self, in ages long gone by,
Whom never softness swayed, not favour wooed,
Heaped on the wise, the pious, and the good.
Then, Allius, blest be thou, and blest be she,
The fair whose life is life and love to thee;
Be e'en the mansion blest whose walls contained
Our fervid sports in passion unrestrained;
And he who made us friends, from whom hath grown
The highest happiness my days have known;
And blest, more blest than all, that nymph divine
Whose life alone can still give bliss to mine.

Acme and Septimius

WHILST on Septimius' panting Breast
(Meaning nothing less than rest)
Acme lean'd her loving head
Thus the pleas'd Septimius said:

My dearest Acme, if I be
Once alive, and love not thee
With a passion far above
All that e're was called love,
In a Libyan desert may
I become some lion's prey,
Let him, Acme, let him tear
My breast, when Acme is not there.

The God of Love who stood to hear him,
(The God of Love was always near him)
Pleas'd and tickl'd with the sound,

Sneez'd aloud, and all around
The little Loves that waited by,
Bow'd and blest the augury.
Acme, enflam'd with what he said,
Rear'd her gently-bending head,
And her purple mouth with joy
Stretching to the delicious boy
Twice (and twice would scarce suffice)
She kist his drunken, rolling eyes.

My little life, my all (said she)
So may we ever servants be
To this best God, and n'er retain
Our hated liberty again,
So may thy passion last for me,
As I a passion have for thee
Greater and fiercer much than can
Be conceiv'd by thee a man.
Into my marrow it is gone,
Fixt and settled in the bone,
It reigns not only in my heart,
But runs, like life, through ev'ry part.

She spoke; the God of Love aloud,
Sneez'd again and all the crowd
Of little Loves that waited by
Bow'd and blest the augury.

This good omen thus from Heaven
Like a happy signal given,
Their loves and lives (all four) embrace,
And hand in hand run all the race.
To poor Septimius (who did now
Nothing else but Acme grow)
Acme's bosom was alone
The whole world's imperial throne,

And to faithful Acme's mind
Septimius was all human kind.

If the Gods would please to be
But advis'd for once by me,
I'd advise 'em when they spy
Any illustrious piety,
To reward her, if it be she
To reward him, if it be he;
With such a husband, such a wife,
With Acme's and Septimius' life.

Epithalamium

URANIA'S son, whose home is on
The heights of skyey Helicon,
Who the virgin in her bloom
Bringest to her lusty groom,
Hymen, hear, thou lovers' friend!
Hear, and hither blithely wend!

Flowers around these brows of thine
Of sweet marjoram entwine;
Bring the scarf with hue of flame,
Type and veil of maiden shame;
Come, and on thy snowy feet
Let the saffron sandals meet!

In this day, when all rejoice,
Laugh, and, with thy silvery voice
Carolling the nuptial song,
Dance with jocund feet along,
And aloft within thy hand
Wave the blazing pine-tree brand!

Vinia doth with Manlius wed;
Omens blest surround their bed:
Good she is, and fair, and bright
As the Queen of Ida's height,
Venus, when the prize to claim
To the Phrygian judge she came.

As the fragrant myrtle, found
Flourishing on Asian ground,
Thick with blossoms overspread,
By the Hamadryads fed
For their sport with honey-dew,
All so sweet is she to view.

Hither, then, thyself betake,
And a little while forsake
The Aonian grottoes hid
Thespia's rocky wolds amid,
Washed in many a plashy pool
By Aganippe's waters cool.

And call the lady home with soul
Submissive to her lord's control;
Around her heart love's tendrils bind,
Until, like clasping ivy twined
Around a stately tree, they hold
It mazed in meshes manifold.

And you, ye stainless virgins, whom
A day awaits of kindred doom,
Combine to give her welcoming,
And here with us in measure sing,
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, thou
Attend us with thy blessing now!

That summoned by your voices chaste,
He may to do his office haste,

And hither wend more swift and sure,
The harbinger of blisses pure,
Who doth for evermore delight
True hearts in wedlock to unite.

What god shall worshipped be above
This god, yea this, by all who love?
Or which of the celestials find
More adoration from mankind?
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, thou
Attend us with thy blessing now!

Thee doth the parent full of dread
Implore to bless his children's bed;
For thee, for thee, the virgin chaste
Unclasps the girdle from her waist;
The bridegroom lists with throbbing heart,
Till thou within the chamber art.

The maiden all in blushes dressed,
Thou bearest from her mother's breast,
And giv'st into her lover's arms,
That close triumphant on her charms.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, thou
Attend us with thy blessing now?

Without thee love no bliss can reap,
And its good name unsullied keep;
But it is blest, yet pure the while,
If thou upon its raptures smile.
Oh, which of all the gods in bliss
Is worthy to compare with this?

Without thee can no home beget
An honoured progeny, nor yet
The parent in the heir survive—
But with thee all his blossoms thrive.

Oh, which of all the gods in bliss
Is worthy to compare with this?

The lands from which thy rites are barred,
Can ne'er, their frontier-bounds to guard,
Breed chiefs whom all revere; but they,
If thou conferr'st thy blessing, may.
What god of all the gods in bliss
Is worthy to compare with this?

And now, ye gates, your wings unfold!
The virgin draweth nigh. Behold
The torches, how upon the air
They shake abroad their gleaming hair!
Come, bride, come forth! no more delay!
The day is hurrying fast away!

But lost in shame and maiden fears
She stirs not,—weeping, as she hears
The friends that to her tears reply,
Thou must advance, the hour is nigh!
Come, bride, come forth! no more delay!
The day is hurrying fast away!

Dry up thy tears! For well I trow,
No woman lovelier than thou,
Aurunculeia, shall behold
The day all panoplied in gold
And rosy light uplift his head
Above the shimmering ocean's bed!

As in some rich man's garden-plot,
With flowers of every hue inwrought,
Stands peerless forth with drooping brow
The hyacinth, so standest thou!
Come, bride, come forth! no more delay!
The day is hurrying fast away!

Come forth, fair bride! Delay no more!
Come forth and hear the hymn we pour
To Hymen, mighty god, for thee!
Come forth, sweet bride! The torches, see,
Are waving high their golden hair!
Then come in all thy beauty rare!

No base adult'ress from his vows
Shall ever wean thy constant spouse,
Nor any lure of pleasures vile
His loyalty from thee beguile;
But, nestling to thy gentle breast,
He'll live in thee supremely blest.

As round its wedded elm the vine
Doth all its clinging tendrils twine,
So in thy loving arms will he
Be twined and circled round by thee.
But day is hurrying fast away;
Come, bride, come forth! no more delay!

And thou white-footed couch, in pride
That wait'st the coming of the bride,
Above all couches blest, do thou
From yonder flowers that deck thee now
A perfume breathe so exquisite,
Shall steep the lovers in delight!

What joys ecstatic soon shall greet
Thy lord, what thrilling raptures sweet,
Beneath the glimpses of the moon,
And in the hush of sultry noon!
But day is hurrying fast away;
Then come, sweet bride, no more delay!

Raise, boys, your torches! raise them high!
I see the scarf of crimson nigh.

On! To her home the bride to bring,
And, as ye move, in measure sing
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

* * * *

Oh happy bride, how richly blest,
Of such a lordly home possessed,
As from thy spouse thou tak'st to-day,
Which to the end shall own thy sway!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Till hoary age shall steal on thee,
With loitering step, and trembling knee,
And palsied head, that, ever bent,
To all in all things nods assent!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Thy golden-sandalled feet do thou
Lift lightly o'er the threshold now!
Fair omen this! And pass between
The lintel-post of polished sheen!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

See where, within, thy lord is set
On Tyrian-tinctured coverlet,
His eyes upon the threshold bent,
And all his soul on thee intent!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Within his inmost heart a fire
Is flaming up of sweet desire,
As warm as that which flames in thine,

Yea, warmer, wilder, more divine!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Thou purple-vestured youth, untwine
The rounded arm that rests on thine,
And let the maid, by others led,
Advance to climb her husband's bed!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Ye dames, who have your husband's praise
Well-earned through length of many days,
In bonds of single wedlock tied,
Advance, 'tis yours to place the bride!
Hail, Hymen! Hymenaeus, hail!
Hail, Hymen, Hymenaeus!

Enter, husband! Now thou mayst!
In the couch thy wife is placed;
And her cheeks with shame aglow
'Neath the veil of saffron show,
Like the pale parthenium through
Poppy-beds of saffron hue.

Thou too, by the gods I vow,
Not less beautiful art thou!
Venus, who endows the fair,
Hath on thee bestowed her care.
Soon the day will disappear;
Tarry not, but enter here.

Tarried hast thou not, indeed.
Now, to recompense thy speed,
Venus aid thy genial task,
Since thou scorn'st thy love to mask;

What thou wishest boldly taking,
Of thy joy no secret making.

Let him first compute the grains
Of the sand on Egypt's plains,
Or the stars that gem the nights,
Who would count the rare delights,
Which thy spousals yet shall bless,
Joys in number numberless!

Now disport, and stint ye not!
Children be anon begot.
'Tis not meet so old a stem
Should be left ungraced by them,
To transmit its fame unshorn
Down through ages yet unborn.

Soon my eyes shall see, mayhap,
Young Torquatus on the lap
Of his mother, as he stands
Stretching out his tiny hands,
And his little lips the while
Half open on his father smile.

And oh! may he in all be like
Manlius his sire, and strike
Strangers, when the boy they meet,
As his father's counterfeit,
And his face the index be
Of his mother's chastity!

Him, too, such fair fame adorn,
Son of such a mother born,
That the praise of both entwined
Call Telemachus to mind,
With her who nursed him on her knee,
Unparagoned Penelope!

Now, virgins, let us shut the door!
Enough we've toyed, enough and more!
But fare ye well, ye loving pair,
We leave ye to each other's care;
And blithely let your hours be sped
In joys of youth and lustyhed!

Nuptial Song

YOUTHS

Lo, HESPER is at hand! Rise, youths! His light
Expected long now harbingers the night.
'Tis time to quit the feast. We must away.
Swell high with me the hymenéal lay.
Anon the virgin comes in blushes by.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, be thou nigh!

MAIDENS

Mark you the youths? Rise up, rise up, each maid!
Already hath the evening star displayed
In the dim welkin his Oetean flame.
Mark you their nimbleness? Then know their aim!
Anon they'll sing a lay we must outvie.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, be thou nigh!

YOUTHS

No easy triumph, comrades, shall we gain.
See how the maids are practising their strain!
Nor vainly so. With undivided care
Their task is wrought—what marvel, if 'tis fair?
Whilst we, who labour with distracted wit,
Are like to lose the palm, and so 'tis fit,
Bestowing here our voice, and there our ear.
Well studied work to victory is dear—
Pains undivided, toil that will not tire;
Then kindle to your task with answering fire!

Anon they will begin; we must reply.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, be thou nigh!

MAIDENS

Say, Hesper, say, what fire of all that shine
In Heaven's great vault more cruel is than thine?
Who from the mother's arms her child can tear—
The child that clasps her mother in despair;
And to the youth, whose blood is all aflame,
Consigns the virgin sinking in her shame!
When towns are sacked, what cruelty more drear?
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, Hymen, hear!

YOUTHS

Say, Hesper, say, what fire of all that shine
In Heaven's great vault more jocund is than thine?
Who with thy flame dost ratify the bond
Of wedlock-troth first vowed by lovers fond,
By parents vowed, but consummated ne'er,
Until thy star hath risen upon the air?
What choicer hour sends heaven our life to cheer?
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, Hymen, hear!

MAIDENS

Woe, my companions, woe, that Hesper thus
Hath reft the fairest of our mates from us!
Why were we heedless of thy coming—why?
For most it fits to watch, when thou art nigh.
To stolen delights by night the lover hies,
And him wilt thou, oh Hesper, oft surprise,
When thou in other name dost reappear.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, Hymen, hear!

YOUTHS

Heed not the railing of the virgin choir!
They joy to chide thee with fictitious ire.
How, if within their secret soul they long

For what they so vituperate in song?
Then to their chiding turn a heedless ear.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, draw thou near!

MAIDENS

As in a garden grows some floweret fair,
Safe from the flocks, safe from the ploughman's share,
Nursed by the sun, by gentle breezes fanned,
Fed by the showers, admired on every hand,
There as it coyly blossoms in the shade,
Desired by many a youth, by many a maid;
But pluck that flower, its witchery is o'er,
And neither youth nor maid desires it more.
So is the virgin prized, endeared as much,
Whilst yet unsullied by a lover's touch;
But if she lose her chaste and virgin flower,
Her beauty's bloom is blighted in an hour:
To youths no more, no more to maidens dear.
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, be thou near!

YOUTHS

As grows a widowed vine in open fields,
It hangs its head, no mellow clusters yields;
So droops the fragile stem, its topmost shoot
With nerveless tendril hangs about its root;
That vine no husbandman nor rustic swain
Hath cared to tend or cultivate or train;
But if by happier chance that self-same vine
Around a husband elm its tendrils twine,
Then many a husbandman and rustic swain
Its shoots will tend and cultivate and train.
Even such the virgin, and unprized as much,
That fades, untended by a lover's touch;
But when, in fulness of her maiden pride,
Some fitting mate has won her for his bride,
She's loved as never she was loved before,
And parents bless her, and are stern no more.

YOUTHS AND MAIDENS

Then spurn not, oh ye virgins, such a groom!
Unmeet it is to spurn the man to whom
Thy father gave thee, and thy mother too;
For unto them is thy obedience due.
Not wholly thine is thy virginity;
Thy parents own some part of it in thee.
One third thy father's is by right divine,
One third thy mother's; one alone is thine.
Then war not with these twain, who with thy dower
Have given their son-in-law their rights and power.
Come! to the bridal-chamber hence—away!
Oh Hymen, Hymenaeus, bless our rites to-day!

Atys

ATYS o'er the distant waters, driving in his rapid bark,
Soon with foot of wild impatience touched the Phrygian forest dark,
Where amid the awful shades possessed by mighty Cybelë,
In his zealous frenzy blind,
And wand'ring in his hapless mind,
With flinty knife he gave to earth the weights that stamp virility.
Then as the widowed being saw its wretched limbs bereft of man,
And the unaccustomed blood that on the ground polluting ran,
With snowy hand it snatched in haste the timbrel's airy round on high
That opens with the trumpet's blast thy rites, Maternal Mystery;
And upon its whirling fingers, while the hollow parchment rung,
Thus in outcry tremulous to its wild companions sung:—

"Now come along, come along with me,
Worshippers of Cybelë,
To the lofty groves of the deity!
Ye vagabond herds that bear the name
Of the Dindymenian dame!
Who seeking strange lands, like the banished of home,
With Atys, with Atys distractedly roam;
Who your limbs have unmanned in a desperate hour
With a frantic disdain of the Cyprian's power;
Who have carried my sect through the dreadful salt sea,
Rouse, rouse your wild spirits careeringly!
No delay, no delay,
But together away,
And follow me up to the dame all-compelling,
To her high Phrygian groves and her dark Phrygian dwelling,
Where the cymbals they clash, and the drums they resound,
And the Phrygian's curved pipe pours its moanings around,
Where the ivy-crowned priestesses toss with their brows,
And send the shrill howl through their deity's house,
Where they shriek, and they scour, and they madden about,—
'Tis there we go bounding in mystical rout."

No sooner had spoken
This voice half-broken,
When suddenly from quivering tongues arose the universal cry,
The timbrels with a boom resound, the cymbals with a clash reply,
And up the verdant Ida with a quickened step the chorus flew,
While Atys with the timbrel's smite the terrible procession drew;

Raging, panting, wild, and witless, through the sullen
shades it broke,
Like the fierce unconquered heifer bursting from her gall-
ing yoke;
And on pursue the sacred crew, till at the door of Cybelë,
Faint and fasting, down they sink in pale immovability:
The heavy sleep,—the heavy sleep—grows o'er their fail-
ing eyes,
And locked in dead repose the rabid frenzy lies.

But when the Sun looked out with eyes of light
Round the firm earth, wild seas, and skies of morning white,
Scaring the lingering shades
With echo-footed steeds,
Sleep sped in flight from Atys, hurrying
To his Pasithea's arms on tremulous wing;
And the poor dreamer woke, oppressed with sadness,
To memory woke and to collected madness—
Struck with its loss, with what it was, and where,
Back trod the wretched being in despair
To the seashore, and stretching forth its eye
O'er the wide waste of waters and of sky
Thus to its country cried with tears of misery·—
"My country, oh my country, parent state,
Whom, like a very slave and runagate,
Wretch that I am, I left for wilds like these,
This wilderness of snow and matted trees,
To house with shivering beasts and learn their wants,
A fierce intruder on their sullen haunts—
Where shall I fancy thee? Where cheat mine eye
With tracking out thy quarter in the sky?
Fain, while my wits a little space are free,
Would my poor eye-balls strain their points on thee!
Am I then torn from home and far away?
Doomed through these woods to trample, day by day,
Far from my kindred, friends, and native soil,
The mall, the race, and wrestlers bright with oil?

Ah, wretch, bewail, bewail; and think for this
On all thy past variety of bliss!
I was the charm of life, the social spring,
First in the race and brightest in the ring;
Warm with the stir of welcome was my home,
And when I rose betimes my friends would come
Smiling and pressing in officious scores,
Thick as the flowers that hang at lovers' doors.
And shall I then a ministring madman be
To angry gods, a howling devotee,
A slave to bear what never senses can,
Half of myself, sexless, a sterile man?
And must I feel, with never-varied woes,
Th' o'erhanging winter of these mountain snows,
Skulking through ghastly woods for evermore,
Like the lean stag or the brute vagrant boar?
Ah me, ah me, already I repent;
E'en now, e'en now I feel my shame and punishment!"

As thus with rosy lips the wretch grew loud,
Startling the ears of heaven's imperial crowd,
The Mighty Mistress o'er her lion yoke
Bowed in her wrath; and loosening, as she spoke,
The left-hand savage, scatterer of herds,
Roused his fell nature with impetuous words:—
"Fly, ruffian, fly, indignant and amain,
And scare this being who resists my reign,
Back to the horror-breathing woods again.
Lash thee, and fly, and shake with sinewy might
Thine ireful hair, and as at dead of night
Fill the wide echoes with rebellowing fright."
Threatening she spoke, and loosed the vengeance dire,
Who, gathering all his rage and glaring fire,
Starts with a roar and scours beneath her eyes,
Scattering the splintered bushes as he flies.
Down by the sea he spies the wretch at last
And springs precipitous:—the wretch as fast

Flies raving back into his living grave,
And there for ever dwells, a savage and a slave.

O Goddess! Mistress! Cybelë! dread name!
O mighty power! O Dindymenian dame!
Far from my home thy visitations be:
Drive others mad, not me:
Drive others into impulse wild and fierce insanity!

To a Friend

OPPRESSED beneath continuous load of care,
I have no commerce with the Muses fair,
Nor can I bring forth fruits of poesy,
Swept, as I am, on waves of misery.
Alas! my brother now by Lethë's stream
Sees the dark waters round his pale feet gleam:
Ah! never shall I hear him, never greet
My best-beloved again, than life more sweet!
Yet with me love shall be than death more strong
And I will tell my grief in mournful song;
As oft the Daulian bird laments her child,
Waiting her lost one in the woodland wild.
But still despite my sorrow, now I send
This poem of Callimachus, my friend,
Lest you should think your words, cast to the wind,
Had passed forgotten from my heedless mind,
E'en as an apple on a virgin's breast,
Whereby her suitor has his love confessed,
Drops at her mother's coming from her gown,
Too careless kept, and lo! the truth is known.
Swiftly it falls; while with a blush of shame
The maiden's downcast cheeks are all aflame.

The Lock of Berenicë

THE SAGE who viewed the shining heavens on high,
And explored the glories of the expanded sky;
Whence rise the radiant orbs, where still they bend
Their wandering course, and where at length descend;
Why dim eclipse obscures the blazing sun;
Why stars at certain times to darkness run;
How Trivia nightly, stole from realms above
To taste on Latmos' rocks the sweets of love;
Immortal Conon, blest with skill divine,
Amid the sacred skies beheld me shine,
The beauteous lock of hair that lately shed
Refulgent beams from Berenicë's head;
The lock she fondly vowed with lifted arms,
Imploring all the powers to save from harms
Her dearer lord, when from his bride he flew
To wreak stern vengeance on the Assyrian crew,
While yet our monarch bore the pleasing scars
Of softer triumphs and nocturnal wars.

O sacred queen, do virgins still despise
The joys of Venus and the nuptial ties,
When oft in bridal rooms their sighs and tears
Distract the parent's heart with anxious fears?
The tears descend from friendly powers above;
The sighs, ye gods, are only signs of love.
With tears like these fair Berenicë mourned
When for her virgin spoils the monarch burned;
With sighs like these she gave him all her charms
And blessed the enraptured bridegroom in her arms.

But none can conquer unresisted steel.
Steel heaved the mightiest mountain to the ground
That Sol beholds in his diurnal round,

Through Athos' rocky sides a passage tore
When first the Medes arrived at Phthia's shore.
Then winds and waves drove their swift ships along,
And through the new made gulf impelled the throng.
If these withstood not steel's all conquering blow,
What could thy hair against so dire a foe?
O mighty Jove! may still thy wrath divine
Pour fierce destruction on their impious line,
Who dug with hands accursed the hollow mine;
Who first from earth could shining ore produce,
First tempered steel, and taught its various use.
As thy bright locks bewailed their sister gone,
Arsinoè's horseman, Memnon's only son,
On fluttering wings descended from on high
To bear the beauteous tress above the sky;
Then upward bent his flight and softly placed
Thy radiant hair in chaste Arsinoë's breast,
Whom Zephyritis we and Venus name,
And on Canopus' shores her altars flame;
When late the wingéd messenger came down
At her desire, lest Ariadne's crown
Should still unrivalled glitter in the skies;
And that thy precious hair, a richer prize,
The spoils devoted to the gods divine,
Might from the fields of light as brightly shine.

But on the widowed bed you wept alone,
And mourned the brother in the husband gone.
What sorrow then my pensive queen oppprest,
What pangs of absence tore her tender breast!
When, lost in woe, no trace remained behind
Of all her virgin mirth and strength of mind.
Hadst thou forgot the deed thy worth achieved,
For which thy brows the imperial crown received;
The wondrous deed that placed thee far beyond
Thy fair compeers and made a monarch fond?
But when for wars he left your soft embrace

What words you spoke, with what endearing grace
Still breathed your soft complaints in mournful sighs
And wiped with lifted hands your streaming eyes!
Didst thou, fair nymph, lament by power divine
Or for an absent lover only pine?
Then to the gods you vowed with pious care
A sacred offering, your immortal hair.
With blood of slaughtered bulls, would Heaven restore
Your lord in triumph to his native shore;
Should he, returning soon, with high renown
Add vanquished Asia to the Egyptian crown:
And I, fair lock, from orbs of radiance now
Diffuse new light to pay thy former vow.

Yet hear, O queen, the solemn oath I swear,
By thy bright head and yet remaining hair;
I joined unwilling the ethereal wheel;
And well I know what woes the perjured feel:

To heaven the goddess raised me, bathed in tears,
An added splendour to the starry spheres.
Betwixt the Lion and the Virgin chaste,
Close to Lycäon's child Callisto placed,
Full to the west with sparkling beams I lead,
And bright Boötes in my course precede,
Who scarcely moves along the ethereal plain
And late and slowly sinks beneath the main.
But though the gods surround my throne at night,
And in the seas I sleep with morning light,
Yet, O Rhamnusian maid, propitious hear
The words of sacred truth unawed by fear.
Let every star reproachful curses dart,
I will unfold the secret of my heart!
Though placed on high, sad absence I deplore,
Condemned to join my lovely queen no more,
On whose fair head, while yet in virgin bloom,
I drank unmeasured sweets and rich perfume.

But now, ye maids, and every beauteous dame,
For whom on nuptial nights the torches flame,
Though fondly wedded to some lovely boy,
Your virgin choice and partner of your joy,
Forbear to taste the pleasures of a bride,
Nor from your bosoms draw the veil aside,
Till oils in alabaster ye prepare
And chastely pour on Berenicë's hair.
But I the impure adulteress will confound
And dash the ungrateful offering to the ground:
From her no rich libation I demand,
I scorn the gift of her unhallowed hand.
But if the virtuous fair invoke my power,
Unbounded bliss shall crown the nuptial hour:
To her shall Concord, from high heaven descend,
And constant Love her soft retreats attend.

And when, bright queen, on solemn feasts your eyes
Shall hail Arsinoë radiant in the skies;
When she demands, bright opening on your view,
The sacred rites to heavenly Venus due;
If thy loved lock appear resplendent there,
Let me with her an equal offering share.
But why should these surrounding stars detain
Thy golden hair in this ethereal plain?
Oh, could I join thy beauteous head once more,
The sacred head on which I grew before,
Though I should ever lose my light divine,
And moist Arcturus next the Virgin shine!

The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis

THE PINES, 'tis sung, that Pelion's summit bore
Through Neptune's liquid kingdom swam of old
To flowing Phasis and the Colchian shore.

Ambitious thence to fetch the fleece of gold
The flower of Greece, in youthful vigour bold,
Dared through the pathless wilds and briny spray
With sweeping oars their swift career to hold.
The goddess, whom earth's towered towns obey,
The timbers of their flying chariot deigned to lay.

The first it was that ever ploughed the deep.
Roused by the foamy tumult, from their blue
Retreats the admiring water-maidens peep,
To learn the cause and see the monster new.
That day, that day alone did mortals view
The nymphs of ocean half their silver breast
Above the waves reveal. Then Peleus knew
Sweet passion; Thetis then his soul possessed;
Then Thetis with her smiles a human suitor blessed.

Oh, in the world's too happy season born!
Immortal heroes! godlike spirits! ye
Full often shall your poet's song adorn.
And thou, O Peleus, pride of Thessaly,
In nuptial bliss excelling! Jove to thee
His love did yield. And did thy soul admire
Neptune's fair daughter? Did the queen of sea
Thy suit accept? nor Ocean, royal sire
Who all the world surrounds, reject thy bold desire?

The wished-for day arrives: all Thessaly
In joyful numbers throng the royal dome.
Their gifts, their looks, proclaim their loyal glee.
From Scyros, and from Tempë, and their home
At Cranon, and Larissa's walls, they come
To Pharsalie! to Pharsalie! The plains
Untilled are left: at large the oxen roam;
No more the hedger's hook the shade restrains;
Uncleared the vineyard lies; unused the plough remains

But the fair palace, through each rich recess,
With silver and with gold did brightly shine,
With glittering goblets which the tables press,
And costly seats, and every splendid sign
Of regal treasure. Chief, the bridal shrine,
With ivory richly wrought, was set and closed
Its rosy curtains for the wife divine.
The curtains' broidered work the deeds disclosed
Of warrior men of old, with wondrous art composed.

There Ariadne from the murmuring strand
Of Dia saw her Theseus swiftly sail,
And leave her lonely on a desert land.
At once his vows and vessel to the gale
The perjured lover gives. Her senses fail.
Just roused from fatal sleep, she scarce believes
The scene her eyes behold. As marble pale
She stands. With boundless woe the victim grieves.
Ah, wretch! what thorny pangs love's sweet delusion leaves?

In the wild flow of grief's tumultuous tide
The gown that hid the beauties of the fair,
The girdle that restrained her bosom's pride,
The ribbon that confined her flowing hair,
Drop on the wave and float unheeded there.
Of only Theseus Ariadne thought,
Pierced with the bitter stings of dark despair,
Her robe, her fillet lost, regarding not;
All, Theseus, all but thee the hapless maid forgot!

'Twas when, his Athens to redeem from woe,
To mighty Minos and the Cretan shore
The patriotic hero dared to go,
To combat with the monster Minotaur.
Of Attic maids and youths the chosen flower
For murdered Androgeus sad tribute sent—

His yearly banquet did the fiend devour.
Ah, wretched land! by what misfortune bent!
But Theseus to her aid a generous champion went.

Whom when with eager gaze the royal maid
Beheld, upon the odour-breathing bed
Within her mother's soft embraces laid—
Like myrtle by Eurotas' waters fed,
Like painted bud by vernal zephyr bred—
Ne'er from the youth her glowing eyes she turned,
Till through her stricken heart soft passion sped,
Till deep and well love's lesson sweet she learned,
And all her kindling soul with amorous ardour burned.

Ah, Lady, queen of leafy Idalie!
Ah, Love, of Life's sad hours the balmy zest!
With what a flood of ills environed ye
The fainting maid! What sighs escaped her breast
For the fair stranger! With what fears oppressed
Wan, like a golden statue, sat she then,
When the ambitious warrior rushed in quest
Of the fierce monster in his twisted den!
What vows for him she sent to heaven, unheard by men!

Needless her prayers. As on the mountain brow
The pitchy pine or many-membered oak
A mighty whirlwind with resistless blow
Uproots, far scattered by the blasting stroke;
The monster thus the might of Theseus broke,
Quelled his fierce rage and bowed his hornéd head.
Then forth his way the conquering hero took,
His steps directing by the slender thread,
Lest the beguiling maze should baulk his wandering tread.

But why, digressing from my purpose high,
The remnant of the mournful tale declare?

How fled the daughter from the father's eye,
How for a sister's arms, a mother's care—
A mother for her son in dark despair—
The charms of Theseus and of love she chose?
Or how to foamy Dia they repair?
How there, while she is sunk in deep repose,
Deserting his betrothed the faithless rover goes?

Full many a scream of keenly-piercing pain
The hollow echoes to her voice reply.
Full oft the rugged rocks she mounts, to strain
O'er ocean's briny waste her aching eye.
And now into the waves (sharp agony
Her senses robs) into the waves she ran
As if to reach her Theseus she would try.
And now, with many a mingled sob, began
To vent her last complaints on the perfidious man.

"And couldst thou, Theseus, from her native land
Thy Ariadne bring; then, cruel, so
Desert thy victim on a lonely strand?
And didst thou perjured dare to Athens go,
Nor dread the weight of Heaven's avenging blow?
Could nought thy heart with sacred pity touch?
Nought make thy soul the baleful plot forego
'Gainst her that loved thee? Ah, not once were such
The vows, the hopes thy smooth professions did avouch!

"Then all was truth: then did thy honied tongue
Of wedded faith the flattering fable weave.
All, all unto the winds of heaven are flung!
Henceforth let never listening maid believe
Protesting man! When their false hearts conceive
The selfish wish, to all but pleasure blind,
No words they spare, no oaths unuttered leave.
But when possession cloys their pampered mind,
No care have they for oaths, no words their honour bind.

"For this, then I from instant death did cover
Thy faithless bosom; and for this preferred
E'en to a brother's blood a perjured lover:
Now to be torn by savage beast and bird,
With no due form, no decent rite interred!
What foaming sea, what savage of the night
In murky den thy monstrous birth conferred?
What whirlpool, quicksand, gave thee to the light,
The welcome boon of life thus basely to requite?

"What though thy royal father's stern command
The band of marriage to our lot forbade?
Oh, safely still into thy native land
I might have gone, thy happy serving-maid:
There gladly washed thy snowy feet, or laid
Upon thy blissful bed the purple vest.
Ah, vain appeal! upon the winds conveyed—
The heedless winds, that hear not my behest
No words his ear can reach, or penetrate his breast.

"Far, far he wanders o'er the foamy sea.
No soul is seen upon this desert shore,
Ah, Fortune leagued with him to injure me!
Oh, might my prayer departed time restore!
Great Jove, oh would that never through the roar
Of ocean, with the cursèd tribute-feast,
To happy Crete had pierced the Attic oar!
Ah, would that ne'er the dear destructive guest
His beauteous form had shown, his false design suppressed!

"Where shall I turn? What hope remains for me?
To Crete?—between us rolls the stormy main.
My father?—I deserted him to flee
With one whose hands my brother's life-drops stain.
My husband?—who upon the briny plain
Far roves away. This isle is desolate:
On every side the waves my steps restrain:

No flight, no hope: all, all is desperate:
All tells of speedy death, inevitable fate.

"Yet shall not sight these languid eyelids fail,
Nor vital sense forsake my weary frame,
Ere to the gods I lift my dying wail,
And from just heaven its ready judgments claim.
Ye, then, who vindicate their deeds of shame
On guilty men; whose vengeance-breathing breast
Speaks in the snaky hair, the withering flame:
Come, Furies, come! Give ear to the request
An injured woman makes, with maddening woe oppressed

"Since forced by sad misfortune I complain;
Since deep and true the sorrows that I bear;
Ah, let not my petition be in vain!
Let the vile author of my misery share
As sad a fate, as gloomy a despair,
As brought his cruel deed on wretched me!"
She spoke: the immortal monarch heard the prayer:
He nods assent: the trembling earth and sea
And flickering stars confess his awful majesty.

Then heaven-struck Theseus from his thoughtless breast—
Ah, wretched son, to what misfortune blind!
Let slip his aged father's strict behest
Before to his retentive heart consigned;
Nor the sweet signs of safety kept in mind
To show, returning to his native land.
'Tis said, when Aegeus to the wind resigned
His son, departing from the Athenian strand,
Thus, with embraces mixed, he gave his last command—

"Son, only son, more sweet than lengthened life;
So late restored, these aged arms to bless;
So soon again exposed to mortal strife;

Since fortune and thy brave impetuousness
My chosen bliss forbid me to possess,
Nor half on thee my famished eyes have fed,
No joy my soul can feel, no word express
Of aught but grief; and on my hoary head
Defiling dust my hand with many a groan shall spread.

"Nor shall thy ship a cheerful livery show.
But dark shall be the sail that on thy mast
Is hoisted: that my deep parental woe
E'en in the mourning colour may be traced.
But should our nation's patroness, the chaste
Minerva, to thy venturous hand permit
The monster to the shades of death to cast,
Take heed this charge upon thy heart be writ,
And from thy mindful thought let nothing banish it.

"Soon as, returning o'er the watery main,
Thy country's cliffs salute thy joyful sight,
Then lower the sign of mourning once again;
Haul down the gloomy sail and hoist the white
That not a moment of the dear delight
Be lost, my hero's safe return to know."
He spoke: the youth upon his heart did write
The words—alas, obliterated now,
As flit the mountain-clouds, when scattering breezes blow.

When then the father from his lofty tower,
Where every day he watched the prospect blue,
And shed of anxious tears a ceaseless shower,
At last his son's returning vessel knew,
The gloomy sail struck his despairing view.
His Theseus lost by cruel fate believing
All headlong from the rocks himself he threw.
The heart, forgetful of a mistress grieving,
Forgetfulness repaid, itself of joy bereaving.

While she, beholding his departing ship,
Wild sorrow in her wounded bosom wore,
Lo! o'er the isle a band of Satyrs skip
With frantic rout and bacchanalian roar.
Their ivy-circled spears on high they bore;
About their waist the wreathing serpent wound;
From a live ox the quivering members tore;
Or darkly wrought their secret rites profound;
Or maddening screamed and rolled their wild heads round and round.

Part with their long arms beat the sounding drum;
Part with loud noise the clattering cymbals rung;
The hoarse horn bayed with deep and murmuring hum;
Its wild barbaric notes the shrill pipe sung.
Ha! Bacchus! Evoe! Bacchus, fair and young!
'Tis thou that with thy raving suite dost rove
To seek the maid upon the island flung.
The stings of soft desire thy soul did move
To meet the mourning fair and offer her thy love.

Such were the scenes that, on the painted veil
Displayed, the admiring youth of Thessaly
With fair and gorgeous visions did regale.
But now from heaven's approaching majesty
The mortal guests retire. As when at sea
His morning breath the rustling zephyr blows;
With gentle laugh and lowly-murmuring glee
First rise the waves; then, as the brisk gale grows,
Rough curls their foamy crest and in the bright sun glows.

Such sounds the guests retiring homeward made
And to the appearing gods their places yield,
First Chiron came and in his hands conveyed
The sylvan stores that Pelion's summits shield.
The varied produce of the fruitful field,
The leafy wealth of all Thessalia's hills,

Flowers by the zephyrs' fostering air revealed,
Fair painted blossoms fed by murmuring rills,
He brings, and with sweet scents the smiling palace fills.

Next Peneus comes from Tempë's verdant mead,—
Tempë overhung with everlasting shade—
And for his lake-nymphs there left room to lead
The Dorian dance. From thence the poplar sad
He brought, the tall beech, and the plane tree glad,
The aery cypress, and the laurel straight,
With all their roots. The branchy load he laid
About the palace walls and at the gate,
Around the royal porch fair verdure to create.

Next came Prometheus cunning, and the trace
Of vengeance for his ancient treason showed,
The traces of his ancient prison-place,
The straitening rock, and fetters' iron load.
Then, with his spouse divine, the father-god
Appeared, and with his children. But on high
Thee, Phoebus, left they in the bright abode;
Thee and thy sister; ye did both deny
A mortal fit to wed a daughter of the sky.

On the soft seats reclined each snowy limb;
The bounteous feast the loaded tables crowned.
Then sang the Fates a high prophetic hymn
With trembling palsy shook. White robes surround
Their aged forms, with purple fringes bound,
White fillets circle their immortal head.
The distaff in their left, with white wool wound,
Their right deducing thence the growing thread,
Their everlasting work the almighty sisters sped.

The spindle, poised upon the taper wheel
Turns to the twisting thumb. The thread to smooth
And knots to level, while the yarn they reel,

They bite the excrescences with nibbling tooth,
The wool-tufts gathering to their withered mouth.
In front, the fleecy work twig-baskets hold.
The task to hasten and the toil to sooth,
With high raised song the coming times they told,
And thus the eternal truth their heavenly strains unfold.

"O great by birth, but in thy soul more great!
Thessalia's bulwark, hail! receive the strain
Prophetic which the sister queens of fate,
To thee declare. The unerring word retain!
Soon, with the star of evening, thou shalt gain
Thy long-wished prize. Blest evening that bestows
Her that shall steep in love—ah happy swain—
Thy melting spirit, while to sweet repose
Thy manly form her soft affection shall compose.

"Turn, spindles, turn! the mystic tissue spin
Such happy lovers roof did never hide,
Such prosperous loves did never pair begin,
As thine, O Peleus, thine, O lovely bride!
From you shall spring a dauntless boy, the pride
Of Greece, the prince of heroes. By the foe
Ne'er shall his yielding footsteps be descried.
O'er the fought field victorious he shall go,
Fierce as the swallowing flame, fleet as the mountain-roe.

"Haste, spindles, haste, prepare the thread of fate!
When Phrygian streams with Phrygian gore abound,
When Pelops' issue, labouring long and late,
The pride of Troy shall level to the ground,
Then shall Achilles chief in arms be found.
Then many a childless mother by her hair,
Her white hair, strewn the smouldering pyre around,
And by her bosom rent in wild despair
His mighty arm and deeds of prowess shall declare.

"Turn, spindles, turn, the mystic woof providing!
As when beneath the sun's meridian glow,
Fast through the golden corn the reaper striding
Thick to the ground the falling grain doth throw,
E'en thus the squadrons of the Trojan foe
Your warrior's bloody battle-blade shall reap.
Scamander's wave his deadly might shall know,
Choked in his course by many a gory heap,
And rolling crimson floods to the Hellespontian deep.

"Draw, spindles, draw, the thread of destiny!
E'en after death his honours shall remain.
When weary Greeks with glistening eye shall see
Neptune-built Troy lie smoking on the plain,
Then on his tomb the virgin victim slain,
Polyxena, shall steep the lofty mound.
Her snowy breast the purple stream shall stain,
Her tender frame drop mangled to the ground,
As faints the offered lamb beneath the sacred wound.

"Go, happy pair, your blissful lot pursue!
The favoured lover let his goddess bless,
For long delay, with consolation due.
No nuptial jar, no sullen singleness,
For her shall wake a mother's fond distress,
With blighted hope of children's children sweet.
But each bright morn the measure of her dress
Her daily-altering beauties shall defeat.
Turn, spindles, turn once more! your mystic task complete."

Thus sang of old the joy-foretelling Fates,
And thus the lot of happy Peleus span.
For then the gods would enter the pure gates
Of heroes, and converse with mortal man,
Before contempt of piety began.
Oft, when the time returned of sacred game,

Where hundred cars their fiery contest ran,
The immortal father to his temple came,
Mixed in the holy feast, and viewed the strife of fame.

Oft on Parnassus with dishevelled hair
His own wild rout has wandering Bacchus led;
All Delphos eager rushed to meet him there
And at their milky-foaming altars fed.
Oft Mars, careering o'er the battle-dead,
Minerva oft, and Nemesis have given
The word of war and formed the squadrons dread.
But now, alas, our many crimes have driven
Far from polluted earth the righteous powers of heaven.

For, since o'er justice lust and wrong prevail;
Since brother brother slays in horrid strife;
And children cease their parents to bewail;
The father would abridge his first-born's life
To revel freely in a second wife;
The mother e'en contracts an impious tie
With her unconscious child,—a world, thus rife
Of sin, scorn purer spirits; they deny
Their presence to our feasts, and hid in darkness lie.

LUCRETIUS

ON THE NATURE OF THINGS

Basic Principles

PARENT of Rome! by gods and men beloved,
Benignant Venus! thou, the sail-clad main
And fruitful earth, as round the seasons roll,
With life who swellest, for by thee all live,
And, living, hail the cheerful light of day:—
Thee, goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,
The tempests fly: dedalian Earth to thee
Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets: Ocean laughs,
And the blue heavens in cloudless splendour decked.
For, when the Spring first opes her frolic eye,
And genial zephyrs long locked up respire,
Thee, goddess, then, th' aerial birds confess,
To rapture stung through every shivering plume:
Thee, the wild herds; hence, o'er the joyous glebe
Bounding at large; or, with undaunted chest,
Stemming the torrent tides. Through all that lives
So, by thy charms, thy blandishments o'erpowered,
Springs the warm wish thy footsteps to pursue:
Till through the seas, the mountains, and the floods,
The verdant meads, and woodlands filled with song
Spurred by desire each palpitating tribe
Hastes, at thy shrine, to plant the future race.
Since, then, with universal sway thou rul'st,
And thou alone; nor aught without thee springs,
Aught gay or lovely; thee I woo to guide
Aright my flowing song, that aims to paint

To Memmius' view the essences of things:
Memmius, my friend, by thee, from earliest youth,
O goddess! led, and trained to every grace.
Then, O, vouchsafe thy favour, power divine!
And with immortal eloquence inspire.
Quell, too, the fury of the hostile world,
And lull to peace, that all the strain may hear.
For peace is thine: on thy soft bosom he,
The warlike field who sways, almighty Mars,
Struck by triumphant Love's eternal wound,
Reclines full frequent: with uplifted gaze
On thee he feeds his longing, lingering eyes,
And all his soul hangs quivering from thy lips.
O! while thine arms in fond embraces clasp
His panting members, sovereign of the heart!
Ope thy bland voice, and intercede for Rome.
For, while th' unsheathed sword is brandished, vain
And all unequal is the poet's song;
And vain th' attempt to claim his patron's ear.
Son of the Memmii! thou, benignant, too,
Freed from all cares, with vacant ear attend;
Nor turn, contemptuous, ere the truths I sing,
For thee first harmonized, are full perceived.
Lo! to thy view I spread the rise of things;
Unfold th' immortals, and their blest abodes:
How Nature all creates, sustains, matures,
And how, at length, dissolves; what forms the mass,
Termed by the learned, Matter, Seeds of Things,
And generative Atoms, or, at times,
Atoms primordial, as hence all proceeds.
Far, far from mortals, and their vain concerns,
In peace perpetual dwell th' immortal gods:
Each self-dependent, and from human wants
Estranged for ever. There, nor pain pervades,
Nor danger threatens; every passion sleeps;
Vice no revenge, no rapture virtue prompts.
Not thus mankind. Them long the tyrant power

Of superstition swayed, uplifting proud
Her head to heaven, and with horrific limbs
Brooding o'er earth; till he, the man of Greece,
Auspicious rose, who first the combat dared,
And broke in twain the monster's iron rod.
No thunder him, no fell revenge pursued
Of heaven incensed, or deities in arms.
Urged rather, hence, with more determined soul,
To burst through Nature's portals, from the crowd
With jealous caution closed; the flaming walls
Of heaven to scale, and dart his dauntless eye,
Till the vast whole beneath him stood displayed.
Hence taught he us, triumphant, what might spring,
And what forbear: what powers inherent lurk,
And where their bounds and issues. And, hence, we,
Triumphant too, o'er superstition rise,
Contemn her terrors, and unfold the heavens.
 Nor deem the truths philosophy reveals
Corrupt the mind, or prompt to impious deeds.
No: superstition may, and nought so soon,
But Wisdom never. Superstition 'twas
Urged the fell Grecian chiefs, with virgin blood,
To stain the virgin altar. Barbarous deed!
And fatal to their laurels! Aulis saw,
For there Diana reigns, th' unholy rite.
Around she looked; the pride of Grecian maids,
The lovely Iphigenia, round she looked,—
Her lavish tresses, spurning still the bond
Of sacred fillet, flaunting o'er her cheeks,—
And sought, in vain, protection. She surveyed
Near her, her sad, sad sire; th' officious priests
Repentant half, and hiding their keen steel,
And crowds of gazers weeping as they viewed.
Dumb with alarm, with supplicating knee,
And lifted eye, she sought compassion still;
Fruitless and unavailing: vain her youth,
Her innocence, and beauty; vain the boast

Of regal birth; and vain that first herself
Lisped the dear name of Father, eldest born.
Forced from her suppliant posture, straight she viewed
The altar full prepared: not there to blend
Connubial vows, and light the bridal torch;
But, at the moment when mature in charms,
While Hymen called aloud, to fall, e'en then,
A father's victim, and the price to pay
Of Grecian navies, favoured thus with gales.—
Such are the crimes that superstition prompts!
And dost thou still resist us? trusting still
The fearful tale by priests and poets told?—
I, too, could feign such fables; and combine
As true to fact, and of as potent spell,
To freeze thy blood, and harrow every nerve.—
Nor wrong th' attempt. Were mortal man assured
Eternal death would close this life of woe,
And nought remain of curse beyond the grave,
E'en then religion half its force would lose;
Vice no alarm, and virtue feel no hope.
But, whilst the converse frights him, man will dread
Eternal pain, and flee from impious deeds.
Yet doubtful is the doctrine, and unknown
Whether, co-eval with th' external frame,
The soul first lives, when lives the body first,
Or boasts a date anterior: whether doomed
To common ruin, and one common grave,
Or through the gloomy shades, the lakes, the caves,
Of Erebus to wander: or, perchance,
As Ennius taught, immortal bard, whose brows
Unfading laurels bound, and still whose verse
All Rome recites, entranced—perchance condemned
The various tribes of brutes, with ray divine,
To animate and quicken: though the bard,
In deathless melody, has elsewhere sung
Of Acherusian temples, where, nor soul
Nor body dwells, but images of men,

Mysterious shaped; in wondrous measure wan.
Here Homer's spectre roamed, of endless fame
Possest: his briny tears the bard surveyed,
And drank the dulcet precepts from his lips.
Such are the various creeds of men. And hence
The philosophic sage is called t' explain,
Not the mere phases of the heavens alone,
The sun's bright path, the moon's perpetual change,
And powers of earth productive, but to point,
In terms appropriate, the dissevering lines
'Twixt mind and brutal life; and prove precise
Whence spring those shadowy forms, which, e'en in hours
Wakeful and calm, but chief when dreams molest,
Or dire disease, we see, or think we see,
Though the dank grave have long their bones inhumed.
Yet not unknown to me how hard the task
Such deep obscurities of Greece t' unfold
In Latin numbers; to combine new terms,
And strive with all our poverty of tongue.—
But such thy virtue, and the friendship pure
My bosom bears, that arduous task I dare;
And yield the sleepless night, in hope to cull
Some happy phrase, some well-selected verse,
Meet for the subject; to dispel each shade,
And bid the mystic doctrine hail the day.
For shades there are, and terrors of the soul,
The day can ne'er disperse, though blazing strong
With all the sun's bright javelins. These alone
To Nature yield, and Reason; and, combined,
This is the precept they for ever teach,
That nought from nought by power divine has risen.
But the blind fear, the superstition vain
Of mortals uninformed, when spring, perchance,
In heaven above, or earth's sublunar scene,
Events to them impervious, instant deem
Some power supernal present, and employed.—
Admit this truth, that nought from nothing springs,

And all is clear. Developed, then, we trace,
Through Nature's boundless realm, the rise of things,
Their modes, and powers innate, nor need from heaven
Some god's descent to rule each rising fact.
Could things from nought proceed, then whence the use
Of generative atoms, binding strong
Kinds to their kinds perpetual? Man himself
Might spring from ocean; from promiscuous earth
The finny race, or feathery tribes of heaven:
Prone down the skies the bellowing herds might bound,
Or frisk from cloud to cloud: while flocks, and beasts
Fierce and most savage, undefined in birth,
The field or forest might alike display.
Each tree, inconstant to our hopes, would bend
With foreign fruit: and all things all things yield.
Whence but from elemental seeds that act
With truth, and power precise, can causes spring
Powerful and true themselves? But grant such seeds,
And all, as now, through Nature's wide domain,
In time predicted, and predicted place,
Must meet the day concordant; must assume
The form innately stampt, and prove alone
Why all from all things never can proceed.
Whence does the balmy rose possess the spring?
The yellow grain the summer? or, the vine
With purple clusters, cheer th' autumnal hours?
Whence, true to time, if such primordial seeds
Act not harmonious, can aught here surveyed,
Aught in its season, rear its tender form,
And the glad earth protrude it to the day?
But, if from nought things rise, then each alike,
In every spot, at every varying month,
Must spring discordant; void of primal seeds
To check all union till th' allotted hour.
Nor space for growth would then be needful: all
Springing from nought, and still from nought supplied.
The puny babe would start abrupt to man;

And trees umbrageous, crowned with fruit mature,
Burst, instant, from the greensward. But such facts
Each day opposes; and, opposing, proves
That all things gradual swell from seeds defined,
Of race and rank observant, and intent
T' evince th' appropriate matter whence they thrive.
 But matter thus appropriate, or e'en space
For growth mature, form not the whole required.
The timely shower from heaven must add benign
Its influence too, ere yet the teeming earth
Emit her joyous produce; or, the ranks
Of man and reptile, thence alone sustained,
May spring to life, and propagate their kinds.
Say rather, then, in much that meets the view,
That various powers combine, concordant all,
Common and elemental, as in words
Such elemental letters,—than contend,
That void of genial atoms, aught exists.
 Why formed not Nature man with ample powers
To fathom, with his feet, th' unbottomed main?
To root up mountains with his mighty hands?
Or live o'er lapsing ages victor still?
Why, but because primordial matter, fixt
And limited in act, to all is dealt
Of things created, whence their forms expand.
And hence again we learn, and prove express,
Nought springs from nought, and that, from seeds precise,
Whate'er is formed must meet th' ethereal day.
 Mark how the cultured soil the soil excels
Uncultured, richer in autumnal fruits.
Here, too, the latent principle of things,
Freed by the plough, the fertile glebe that turns
And subjugates the sod, exert their power,
And swell the harvest: else, spontaneous, all
Would still ascend by labour unimproved.
 And as from nought the genial seeds of things
Can never rise, so Nature that dissolves

Their varying forms, to nought can ne'er reduce.
Were things destructible throughout, then all
Abrupt would perish, passing from the sight;
Nor foreign force be wanting to disjoin
Their vital parts, or break th' essential bond.
But since, from seeds eternal all things rise,
Till force like this prevail, with sudden stroke
Crushing the living substance, or within
Deep entering each interstice, to dissolve
All active, Nature no destruction views.
Were time the total to destroy of all
By age decayed,—say whence could Venus' self
The ranks renew of animated life?
Or, if renewed, whence earth's dedalian power
Draw the meet foods to nurture, and mature?
Whence springs and rivers, with perpetual course,
The deep supply? or, ether feed the stars?
Whate'er could perish, ever-during time,
And rolling ages, must have long destroy'd.
But if, through rolling ages, and the lapse
Of ever-during time, still firm at base,
Material things have stood, then must that base
Exist immortal, and the fates defy.
Thus, too, the same efficient force applied
Alike must all things rupture, if, within,
No substance dwelled eternal to maintain
In close, and closer, links their varying bonds.
E'en the least touch,—for every cause alike
Must break their textures, equal in effect,
If no imperishable power opposed,—
E'en touch were then irrevocable death.
But since, with varying strength, the seeds within
Adhere, of form precise, and prove express
Their origin eternal,—free from ill,
And undivided must those forms endure,
Till some superior force the compact cleave.
Thus things to nought dissolve not; but, subdued,

Alone return to elemental seeds.
When, on the bosom of maternal earth,
His showers redundant genial ether pours,
The dulcet drops seem lost: but harvests rise,
Jocund and lovely; and, with foliage fresh,
Smiles every tree, and bends beneath its fruit.
Hence man and beast are nourished; hence o'erflow
Our joyous streets with crowds of frolic youth;
And with fresh songs th' umbrageous groves resound.
Hence the herds fatten, and repose at ease,
O'er the gay meadows, their unwieldy forms;
While from each full-distended udder drops
The candid milk spontaneous; and hence, too,
With tottering footsteps, o'er the tender grass,
Gambol their wanton young, each little heart
Quivering beneath the genuine nectar quaffed.
So nought can perish, that the sight surveys,
With utter death; but Nature still renews
Each from the other, nor can form afresh
One substance, till another be destroyed.
But come, my friend, and, since the muse has sung
Things cannot spring from, or return to nought,
Lest thou should'st urge, still sceptic, that no eye
Their generative atoms e'er has traced;
Mark in what scenes thyself must own, perforce,
Still atoms dwell, though viewless still to sense.
And, first, th' excited wind torments the deep;
Wrecks the tough bark, and tears the shivering clouds:
Now, with wide whirlwind, prostrating alike
O'er the waste champaign, trees, and bending blade;
And now, perchance, with forest-rending force,
Rocking the mighty mountains on their base.
So vast its fury!—But that fury flows
Alone from viewless atoms, that, combined,
Thus form the fierce tornado, raging wild
O'er heaven, and earth, and ocean's dread domain.
As when a river, down its verdant banks

Soft-gliding, sudden from the mountains round
Swells with the rushing rain—the placid stream
All limit loses, and, with furious force,
In its resistless tide, bears down, at once,
Shrubs, shattered trees, and bridges, weak alike
Before the tumbling torrent: such its power!—
Loud roars the raging flood, and triumphs still,
O'er rocks, and mounds, and all that else contends.
So roars th' enraged wind: so, like a flood,
Where'er it aims, before its mighty tide,
Sweeps all created things, or round, and round,
In its vast vortex curls their tortured forms.—
Though viewless, then, the matter thus that acts,
Still there is matter: and, to Reason's ken,
Conspicuous as the visual texture traced
In the wild wave that emulates its strength.

Next, what keen eye e'er followed, in their course,
The light-winged odours? or developed clear
The mystic forms of cold, or heat intense?
Or sound through ether fleeting?—yet, though far
From human sight removed, by all confessed
Alike material; since alike the sense
They touch impulsive; and since nought can touch
But matter; or, in turn, be touched itself.

Thus, too, the garment that along the shore,
Lashed by the main, imbibes the briny dew,
Dries in the sunbeam: but, alike unseen,
Falls the moist ether, or again flies off
Entire, abhorrent of the red-eyed noon.
So fine the attenuated spray that floats
In the pure breeze; so fugitive to sight.

A thousand proofs spring up. The ring that decks
The fair one's finger, by revolving years,
Wastes imperceptibly. The dropping shower
Scoops the rough rock. The plough's attempered share
Decays: and the thick pressure of the crowd,
Incessant passing, wears the stone-paved street.

E'en the gigantic forms of solid brass,
Placed at our portals, from the frequent touch
Of devotees and strangers, now display
The right hand lessened of its proper bulk.—
All lose, we view, by friction, their extent;
But, in what time, what particles they lose,
This envious Nature from our view conceals.
Thus, too, both Time and Nature give to things
A gradual growth: but never yet the sight
That gradual growth explored; nor marked their fall,
Still gradual too, by age, or sure decay:
Nor traced what portions of incumbent rock,
Loaded with brine, the caustic wave dissolves.—
So fine the particles that form the world.
Yet not corporeal is the whole produced
By Nature. In created things exists,
Search where thou wilt, an incorporeal void.
This mark, and half philosophy is thine.
Doubtful no longer shalt thou wander: taught
Th' entire of things, and by our verse convinced.
And know this void is space untouched and pure.
Were space like this vouchsafed not, nought could move:
Corporeal forms would still resist, and strive
With forms corporeal, nor consent to yield;
While the great progress of creation ceased.
But what more clear in earth or heaven sublime,
Or the vast ocean, than, in various modes,
That various matter moves? which, but for space,
'Twere vain t' expect: and vainer yet to look
For procreative power, educing still
Kinds from their kinds through all revolving time.
True, things are solid deemed: but know that those
Deemed so the most are rare and unconjoined.
From rocks, and caves, translucent lymph distils,
And, from the tough bark, drops the healing balm.
The genial meal, with mystic power, pervades
Each avenue of life; and the grove swells,

And yields its various fruit, sustained alone
From the pure food propelled through root and branch
Sound pierces marble; through reclusest walls
The bosom-tale transmits: and the keen frost
E'en to the marrow winds its sinuous way.—
Destroy all vacuum, then, close every pore,
And, if thou canst, for such events account.
Say, why of equal bulk, in equal scale,
Are things oft found unequal in their poise?
O'er the light wool the grosser lead prevails
With giant force. But were th' amount alike
Of matter each contained, alike the weight
Would prove perpetual: for, from matter sole,
Flows weight, and moment, ever prone to earth:
While vacant space nor weight nor moment knows.
Where things surpoise, then, though of equal bulk,
There matter most resides: but where ascends
The beam sublime, the rising substance holds
A smaller share, and larger leaves the void.
Hence draws the sage his creed: in all produced
Finds vacuum still, and calls that vacuum space.
But some there are such doctrines who deny:
And urge in proof, deceptive, that the wave
Not through imagined pores admits the race
With glitt'ring scales—but yields at once, and opes
The liquid path; and occupies, in turn,
The space behind the aureat fish deserts.
Thus, too, that all things act: the spot possessed
Exchanging sole, while each continues full.
Believe them not. If nought of space the wave
Give to its gilded tenants, how, resolve,
Feel they the power t' advance? and if t' advance
They know not, how can, next, the wave thus yield?—
Or matter ne'er can move, then, or within
Some void must mix through all its varying forms,
Whence springs alone the power of motion first.
When force mechanic severs, and, abrupt,

Drives two broad bodies distant, quick between
Flows the light air, and fills the vacuum formed.
But ne'er so rapid can the light air flow
As to forbid all void; since, step by step,
It still must rush till the whole space be closed.
Nor credit those who urge such bodies sole
Can part because the liquid air, compress'd
To closer texture, gives the needed space.
Such feeble reas'ners, in opposing void,
A double void confess: for, first, perforce,
A void they own, where void was none before,
Betwixt the substance severed; and bring next
A proof surmountless that the air itself
Thronged with a prior void: else how, to bounds
Of closer texture, could it e'er contract?
A thousand facts crowd round me: to the same
Converging all. But ample these, I ween,
Though but the footsteps of the mighty whole,
To fix thy faith, and guide thee to the rest.
For as the hound, when once the tainted dew
His nostrils taste, pursues the vagrant fox
O'er hills, and dales, and drags him from his lair;
So may'st thou trace from fact associate fact,
Through every maze, through every doubtful shade,
Till Truth's bright form, at length, thy labours crown
Nor tardy be the toil, for much remains.
So oft, O Memmius! from the sacred fount
By wisdom fed, so largely have I drank,
And such the dulcet doctrines yet untold,
That age may first unman us, and break down
The purple gates of life, ere the bold muse
Exhaust the boundless subject. Haste we, then,
Each pulse is precious, haste we to proceed.
Know, then, th' entire of nature sole consists
Of space and body: this the substance moved,
And that the area of its motive power.
That there is body, every sense we boast

Demonstrates strong: and, if we trust not sense,
Source of all science, then the mind itself,
Perplexed and hopeless, must still wander on
In reasoning lost, to every doubt a prey.
And were not space, were vacuum not allow'd,
In nought could bodies, then, their powers display
Of various action: each compressing each
To motion fatal, as already sung.
Nor is there aught such vacant space besides,
And matter close-embodied, can be traced
A substance forming discrepant from each.
Search where thou wilt, whate'er occurs to view,
Of bulk minute, or large, though e'en its form
Change with the hour, if tangible it prove,
This stamps it matter, and forbids all doubt.
But if intangible, throughout if still
To matter pervious, act where'er it may,
'Tis then void space, and can be nought besides.
All things, moreo'er, a substance must evince
Acting, or suffering act; or, form the sphere
In which to act or suffer. But to act,
Or suffer action, must be matter's sole;
While space alone that needed sphere admits.
Nought, then, 'twixt space and matter can subsist
Of intermediate substance: nought be traced
By keenest efforts of th' external sense,
Or by the meditating mind deduced.
All else we meet with or conceive but these
Are mere conjunctions, or events attached.
And know the learned by conjunctions name
Those powers in each perpetual that inhere,
And ne'er can part till void or matter cease.
Thus heat to fire, fluidity to streams,
Weight to the rock, to all of matter touch,
And want of touch to space. While Discord, Peace,
Oppression, Freedom, Poverty, and Wealth,
And aught that else, of matter, and of space

Lives independent, though engendered hence,
Are termed, and justly, by the wise events.
E'en time, that measures all things, of itself
Exists not; from the mind alone produced,
As, link by link, contemplating minute,
Things present, past, or future: for, of time,
From these disjoined, in motion, or at rest
Tranquil and still, what mortal can conceive?
Thus spring events to birth. The rape renowned
Of beauteous Helen, or the fall of Troy,
Though deemed existences, yet of themselves
Existed never: on material things,
On place and persons acting, or coerced,
Alone dependent. These revolving years
Have long th' irrevocable doom assigned:
And rape and conquest, as events that claimed
From these existence, now exist no more.—
Had ne'er been formed the matter, or the space,
Whose power conjunctive gave those scenes to be;
No fire had e'er, from lovely Helen's eyes,
Glanced through the bosom of the Trojan youth,
And kindled the fierce flames of storied war:
No giant horse the fell Achaean throngs
Poured forth at night, subverting Priam's realm.
Mark, then, how different facts exist and blend
From void or matter; and how justly termed
Of place and body the derived events.
Know, too, that bodies, in their frame consist,
Part, of primordial atoms uncombined,
And part combined and blending: these alone
Pervious and rare; while those so solid formed
No force create can sever, or dissolve.
Nor deem such solids doubtful: though so deemed
By sages oft, who plausibly object
That sound, that thunder, that the voice itself
Breaks through domestic walls: that rigid steel
Admits the blaze, and whitens: vitreous rocks

Melt in the fierce volcano: gold and brass
Forego their icy hardness, and alike
Yield in the fiery conflict, and dissolve:
That e'en the silver chalice, fill'd with lymph
Fervid or cold, unlocks its secret pores,
And warms, at once, or chills th' embracing hand.
Hence deem they matter pervious all, and void
Of solid substance. But attend, benign,
And, since right reason, and the frame of things
Demand the verse, the muse shall briefly prove
The seeds, the principles of matter all
Both solid, and eternal, whence alone
Springs the stupendous fabric of the world.
Of space, of matter, as already sung,
Th' entire of things consists, by nature formed
Distinct and adverse; and existing pure
Each uncontrolled of each. Where matter dwells
Void space can ne'er be found, nor matter found,
Search where thou wilt, where space resides and reigns.
As space is vacant then, material seeds
Must solid prove, perforce, and free from void.
Thus, too, as vacuum dwells in all produced,
Some solid substance must that vacuum bound:
Nor aught of vacuum can created things
Be proved to enclose, if solids not exist,
Whose power alone can such enclosures form.
But solids must be matter; the prime seeds
Of all surveyed, harmonious in their act,
And undecayed when all decays around.
Were there no space, th' entire of things would prove
One boundless solid: and were nought conceived
Of viewless seeds, close filling, void of space,
Each spot possest, all then were vacuum blank.
Thus each from each, from matter space exists
Distinct and clear: since never all is void,
Nor ever full; but this from that preserved
By countless atoms acting though unseen.

These, as already sung, no powers can pierce:
O'er blows external, o'er each vain attempt
Of penetrative solvents, or aught else
Philosophy reveals, triumphant still.
For nought can break, of vacuum all devoid,
Or melt, or moulder, or within admit
Vapour, or cold, or power of pungent heat,
By which dissolves this fabric of the world.
'Tis vacuum lays the base: as this exists,
Augments, or lessens, things alone decay.
What then is solid, and from vacuum free,
Must undecayed, and still eternal live.

Were matter not eternal, ages since
All had returned to nothing whence it sprang,
And from that nothing all again revived.
But since from nothing nought can ever rise,
As proved above, nor aught to nothing shrink,
Seeds there must be of ever-during date,
To which, perpetual, things dissolve, or whence
Flows the fresh pabulum that all repairs.
But seeds thus simple must be solid too;
Else unpreserved through countless ages past,
And useless to recruit th' exhausted world.

Else friction, too, had injured: each by each
Through myriad years abraded, and reduced,
Till nought conceptible had lived to rear,
Each in its time, the progenies of earth:
For all is wasted easier than renewed.
And hence, had all been thus disturbed, dissolved,
And frittered through the long anterior lapse
Of countless ages, future time in vain
Would strive the ruined fragments to repair.
But what more obvious than that bounds exist
To matter decompounding, primal seeds
To forms defined coercing; since again
All springs to birth, harmonious, kinds from kinds,
True to their times, and perfect in their powers?

Yet, though the principles of matter thus
Prove firm and solid, its component forms,
As air, earth, vapour, or translucent stream,
May still be soft and pliant, as combined,
E'en from their birth, with less, or larger void.
But had those principles themselves been reared
Pliant and soft, then whence the sturdy steel,
The close-compacted flint, or aught besides,
Of equal texture, traced through Nature's realm?
Thus simple solids must be still confest;
And all be soft, or rigid, as of these
In more or less concentrate mode composed.

To all has Nature given a bound precise
Of being and perfection; and promulged,
To every varying rank, her varying laws;
Urging to this, from that restraining firm.
Nought suffers change: the feathery tribes of heaven
Bear, on their glossy plumes, through every class,
The same fixt hues that first those classes stamped.
Hence matter too, through all its primal seeds,
Is proved immutable: for if, o'ercome
By aught of foreign force, those seeds could change,
All would be doubtful, nor the mind conceive
What might exist, or what might never live:
Nor why, decide, such variance in their powers,
And final terms of life, or instinct strong,
Through every age, still urging every race
To each pursuit, each action of their sires.

Know, too, each seed, each substance is composed
Of points extreme no sense can e'er detect:
Points that, perforce, minutest of themselves,
To parts can ne'er divide: nor self-educed,
Nor, but as formed, existing, else destroyed.
Parts such can hold not: each the first, pure part,
Itself, of other substance: which, when joined
Alone by kindred parts, in order due,
Forms, from such junction, the prime seeds of things.

But e'en such parts, though by the mind as parts
Conceived, disjoined can ne'er exist; and thence
Adhere by firm, indissoluble bond.
Thus seeds are simple solids, formed compact
Of points extreme, that never can recede:
Not lab'ring jointly to produce some end,
But potent from simplicity alone,
And hence eternal: equally unprone
To waste or sever; and by nature kept
To feed the suffering fabric of the world.
Did no such points exist, extreme and least,
Each smallest atom would be, then, combined
Of parts all infinite; for every part
Parts still would boast, dividing without end.
And, say, what difference could there, then, subsist
'Twixt large and small? for though th' entire of things
Should infinite be deemed, each smallest speck
Still parts as infinite would hold embraced.
But since at this the reasoning mind revolts,
Then must it own, o'erpowered, that points exist
Least by their nature, and of parts devoid:
And solid, hence, and of eternal date.
Hence seeds arise, the last, least parts conceived
Of actual being: the extremest points
To which creative Nature all resolves.
Which, if not least, if still of parts possest,
Could ne'er, with close exactitude, renew
The universal frame: all, all would rise
Of weight diverse, and ever varying form,
Casual in tie, in motion undefined.
Yet should we grant that matter, without end,
For ever wastes; e'en then, from earliest time,
Some matter must have triumphed undecayed,
Cohering still: but what can thus cohere,
What brave the unnumbered repercussions felt
Through ages now evolved, can ne'er decay:
Alike the future conquering as the past.

Hence those who deem the fabric of the world
Educed from fire, itself the source of all,
Far wander from the truth. Thus deemed the sage,
Chief of his sect, and fearless in the fight,
Famed Heraclitus; by the learn'd esteemed
Of doubtful phrase, mysterious; but revered
By crowds of Grecians, flimsy, and untaught.
For such th' obscure applaud; delighted most
With systems dark, and most believing true
The silver sounds that charm th' enchanted ear.
But whence, I ask, if all from fire proceed
Unmixed and simple, spring created things
So various in their natures? Urge not here
That fire condenses now, and now expands;
For if the same, divided or entire,
Its parts condensed a heat can only prove
More fierce; and less when rarefied, and thin.
Still all is fire. Nor canst thou e'er conceive
From fire that aught can spring but fire itself.
Much less, in fire made dense alone, or rare,
Trace the vast variance of created things.
Dense, too, and rare a vacuum must imply,
As urged already; yet full well convinced
What straits surround them if a void exist,
Such sages doubt, but, doubting, still deny:
Fearful of danger, yet averse from truth.
Such, too, reflect not that from things create,
Should void withdraw, the whole at once were dense,
One solid substance all, and unempowered
Aught from itself t' eject, as light, and smoke
Flies from the purple flame; evincing clear
Its parts unsolid, and commixt with void.
But should it still, perchance, be urged, that fires
Perish by junction, and their substance change,
Then must that changing substance waste to nought
And thus from nought th' entire of nature spring.
For what once changes, by the change alone

Subverts immediate its anterior life.
But still, victorious, something must exist,
Or all to nought would perish; and, in turn,
From nought regerminate to growth mature.
 Yet though, most certain, things there are exist
That never change, the seeds of all surveyed,
Whose presence, absence, or arrangement new
That all new-models, certain 'tis, alike,
Those seeds can ne'er be fire. For what avails
Such absence, presence, or arrangement new
Of igneous matter, if the whole throughout
Alike be igneous? Change howe'er it may,
Through every variance all must still be flame.—
Ask'st thou whence fire proceeds then? As I deem,
From certain seeds to certain motions urged,
Or forms, or combinations; which, when changed,
Change too their nature; and, though yielding fire,
Not fire resembling, or aught else perceived
By human sense, or tangible to touch.
 To hold, moreo'er, as Heraclitus held,
That all is fire, and nought besides exists
Through Nature's boundless fabric, is to rave.
T' oppose the mental sense, erroneous oft,
To sense external, whence all knowledge flows,
And whence himself first traced that flame exists.
To sense he trusts, when sense discloses fire,
And yet distrusts in things disclosed as clear.
Can there, in man, be conduct more absurd!—
Where shall we turn us? Where, if thus we fly
Those senses chief that sever true from false?—
 Why, rather, too, should all that else exists
Be thus denied, and fire alone maintained,
Than fire denied, and all maintained besides?
Tenets alike preposterous and wild.
Hence those, in fire, who trace the rise of things,
And nought but fire; or those for air who strive
As source of all; or those the dimpling stream

Who fondly fancy; or the ponderous earth,
For each has armed its champions in its turn,
Alike wide wander from unerring truth.
Nor wanders less the sage who air with fire
Would fain commix, or limpid stream with earth;
Or those the whole who join, fire, ether, earth,
And pregnant showers, and thence the world deduce.
Thus sung Empedocles, in honest fame
First of his sect; whom Agrigentum bore
In cloud-capt Sicily. Its sinuous shores
Th' Ionian main, with hoarse, unwearied wave,
Surrounds, and sprinkles with its briny dew:
And, from the fair Aeolian fields, divides
With narrow frith that spurns the impetuous surge.
Here vast Charybdis raves: here Aetna rears
His infant thunders, his dread jaws unlocks,
And heaven and earth with fiery ruin threats.
Here many a wonder, many a scene sublime,
As on he journeys, checks the traveller's steps;
And shows, at once, a land in harvests rich,
And rich in sages of illustrious fame.
But nought so wonderous, so illustrious nought,
So fair, so pure, so lovely, can it boast,
Empedocles, as thou! whose song divine,
By all rehearsed, so clears each mystic lore,
That scarce mankind believed thee born of man.
Yet e'en Empedocles, and those above,
Already sung, of far inferior fame,
Though doctrines frequent from their bosoms flowed
Like inspiration, sager and more true
Than e'er the Pythian maid, with laurels crowned,
Spoke from the tripod at Apollo's shrine;
E'en these mistook the principles of things,
And greatly wandered in attempt so great.
And, first, they deemed that motion might exist
From void exempt: that things might still be rare,
Still soften, as earth, ether, fire, or fruits,

Or e'en the ranks of animated life,
Though void commixed not with their varying frames.
Then, too, they held no final term ordained
To comminuting atoms: which, through time,
Still crumbled on, and never could be least.
Though from such points as sense itself surveys,
Extreme and least, conjecture we may form
Of points extreme, impalpable to sight,
Least in themselves, that never can divide.
With them, moreo'er, the seeds of things were formed
Soft, and unsolid: but whate'er is soft,
Whate'er unsolid, as at first they spring
From other substance, must perforce decay.
So all to nought would perish, and again
From nought regerminate to growth mature:
Doctrines the muse already has disproved.
Such seeds, too, must be foes; created each
To each adverse; and hence can never meet
But sure perdition waits: or, chance, they part,
Disperst abrupt, as, in contending storms,
Wind, rain, and thunder scatter, and are lost.
But, from such four-fold foes, could all things spring,
And, sprung, to such dissolve—why rather term
Those jarring powers the primal seeds of things,
Than things of them? since, in alternate course,
Each flows from each: th' alternate form is seized,
Th' alternate nature, through perennial time.
Yet could'st thou deem such powers adverse might blend,
And earth with fire, with ether lymph commix,
And still retain their natures unimpaired;
Whilst thus retained, no living form could rise
Traced through creation, animate, or void,
As springs the verdant shrub, of reasoning soul.
For each its nature, through the varying mass,
Would still evince, and earth with air commix,
In ceaseless strife,—and fire with crystal lymph.
But primal seeds, whene'er the form of things

Mutual they gender, must, perforce, assume
An unobtrusive nature, close concealed,
Lest aught superior rise, of power adverse,
And thus th' harmonious union be destroyed.
Such sages, too, from heaven, and heaven's bright fires
Maintain that all proceeds: that fire drawn hence
Converts to ether, ether into showers,
And showers benign to earth: and hence again,
That all from earth returns: first liquid dew,
Then air, and heat conclusive; changing thus,
In ceaseless revolution, changing thus
From heaven to earth, from earth to heaven sublime:
A change primordial seeds could ne'er sustain.
So something still must, void of change, exist;
Or all would perish, all to nought return;
For what once changes, by the change alone
Subverts immediate its anterior life.
Since, then, as sung above, these all commute
Each into each, some seeds must still be owned
That ne'er can change, or all to nought would waste.
Hold rather, then, such seeds exist, endowed
With powers so curious that, as now combined,
If fire they form, combine them but anew,
Add, or deduct, give motion, or subtract,
And all is air; and changing thus, and changed,
That things from things perpetual take their rise.
Nor urge, still sceptic, that each hour displays
All life protruded from the genial earth:
Fed by the balmy air; by heaven's own fire
Matured; and saved from pestilence and death
Alone by showers benignant: and that hence
Man, beast, and herbs alike exist, and thrive.
The fact we own: we own from solid food,
And crystal streams, man draws his daily breath,
Of nerve, of bone, of being else deprived:
But, owning, add, the compounds meet for man,
For brute, for herbage, differ in their kinds,

By different tastes discerned: and differ thus,
And only thus, as formed from various seeds
To all things common, but in various modes
Combined, and fitted to each rising want.
Nor small of import are the modes diverse
In which those seeds approach, recede, or blend:
Since heaven, and earth, and suns, and seas immense,
Herbs, instinct, reason, all are hence derived:
The mode but changed, the matter still the same.
Thus, though the lines, these doctrines that recite,
Flow from the same fixt elemental types,
Yet line from line, in sense, in sound compared,
Egregious differs. Rearranged alone,
Such the vast power by graphic types possest!
Start not when told, then, that the seeds of things
Boast powers superior, and can all create.
From such mistakes, detected and exposed,
Now turn we: and in order next survey
Those doctrines first the Grecian schools imbibed
From sapient Anaxagoras, by them
Termed homoeomery; a phrase ourselves,
In tongue deficient, never can translate.
But these its institutes: that bone from bones,
Minute, and embryon, nerve from nerves arise,
And blood from blood, by countless drops increased.
Gold, too, from golden atoms, earths concrete
From earths extreme; from fiery matters fire,
And lymph from limpid dew. And thus throughout
From primal kinds that kinds perpetual spring.
Yet void he granted not in aught create,
Nor points extreme that never can divide.
In both erroneous, and with those deceived
Classed in our numbers, and opposed above.
Too feeble, too, the rudiments he chose,
If rudiments they be, that hold, at once,
The powers of things, and form the things themselves.
All toil alike, and perish void of aid:

For, when the hour of dissolution draws,
Say, which can baffle the dread fangs of death?
Can ether, lymph, or fire? can nerve, or bones?
In each the strife were vain· since all produced,
Surveyed, or viewless, impotent alike,
Must yield to fate, and perish unredeemed.
But things produced to nought can never fall,
Or fallen, regerminate, as proved above.
Food rears the body, and its growth sustains:
But well we know its tendons, nerves, and blood,
Hence all matured, are foreign and unlike.
If, then, each food be compound, if commixt
With miniatures of all, of blood and nerve,
Of bone and veins; each food compact, or moist,
Of parts unlike must then itself consist;
Of bone, of blood, of tendon, vein, and nerve.
Thus all things spring from earth: but if in earth,
All lurk enveloped, earth of forms consists
Strange, and discordant, panting for the day.
Change still the picture, and the same still flows:
In timbers, thus, if smoke, flame, ashes blend,
Then, too, those timbers hostile parts comprise.
But, here, the ready answer, framed of yore,
By him, the founder of the system, springs:
That, though in all things all things lurk commixt,
What most prevails, what boasts the largest share,
Lies superficial, and is noticed chief.
Fruitless remark, unsolid, and untrue.
For still, at times, when crushed to dust minute
Beneath the pond'rous mill-stone's mighty orb
The crumbling corn with human blood must weep,
Or aught besides of fluid found in man,
And stain with hues obscene: and still, at times,
Each herb unfold the balmy milk so sweet,
That swells the fleecy flock, or odorous kine.
The furrowed glebe, the labouring plough beneath,
Must, too, develop, in its secret womb,

Plants, fruits, and foliage, oft dispersed, and hid:
And, to the woodman, the cleft stock disclose
With ashes smoke, and smoke commixt with fire.
These, facts deny: in things things ne'er exist;
But seeds of things, in various modes arranged,
Various themselves: whence rises all surveyed.
But should'st thou urge that oft beneath the storm,
When rubbed by many a repercussion rude,
Branch against branch, the forest's topmost height
Has blazed from tree to tree; the fact we grant:
Not, with each trunk, that native fires combine;
But that perpetual friction quick collects
Their seeds dispersed; hence gathering ten-fold force,
And flame engendering. For could fire itself
A part constituent of the forest form,
No hour could hide the mischief; every tree
Would blaze, and burn till boundless ruin reigned.
See, then, as earlier sung, how much imports
Th' arrangement, motion, magnitude, and form
Of primal seeds combined: and how the same,
Transposed but little, fuel quick convert
To flame, bright blazing up the swarthy flue:
As flue and fuel, terms of different sound,
Of different sense, their letters but transposed,
Each into each converts with magic speed.
But should'st thou urge that all things still may flow
From primal seeds, and yet those seeds possess
The form, the nature of the things themselves;
The scheme falls self-destroyed.—For then, must seeds
Hold powers adverse; and laugh, and shake their sides,
While tears of anguish down their cheeks distil.
Come, now, and mark perspicuous what remains.
Obscure the subject: but the thirst of fame
Burns all my bosom; and through every nerve
Darts the proud love of letters, and the muse.
I feel th' inspiring power; and roam resolved
Through paths Pierian never trod before.

Sweet are the springing founts with nectar new;
Sweet the new flowers that bloom: but sweeter still
Those flowers to pluck, and weave a roseate wreath,
The muses yet to mortals ne'er have deigned.
With joy the subject I pursue; and free
The captived mind from Superstition's yoke.
With joy th' obscure illume; in liquid verse,
Graceful, and clear, depicting all surveyed:
By reason guided. For as oft, benign,
The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce
On the pale boy, the wormwood's bitter draught,
With luscious honey tints the goblet's edge,
Deceiving thus, while yet unused to guile,
His unsuspecting lip; till deep he drinks,
And gathers vigour from the venial cheat:
So I, since dull the subject, and the world
Abashed recoils, would fain, in honeyed phrase,
Tuned by the muses, to thine ear recite
Its vast concerns; if haply I may hope
To fix thine audience, while the flowing verse
Unfolds the nature, and the forms of things.

Taught then, already that material seeds
Are solid, and o'er time triumphant live,
Attend, benignant, while we next decide
Their number, or if infinite; and tell,
Since void throughout exists, assigning space
For place and motion, if th' entire of things
Be bounded, or unfathomed, and immense.

Th' entire of things, then, bounds can never know:
Else parts possest of farthest and extreme.
But parts can only be extreme, beyond
Where other substance springs, those parts extreme
Binding, though sense the limit ne'er can trace.
If, then, some other substance rise, the first
Forms not th' entire of things. Whate'er it be
That other substance still must part compose.
Vain too is distance: the vast whole alike

To all extends, embracing, and embraced.
Yet grant th' entire of things of bound possest.
Say, to what point shall yon keen archer, placed
E'en on its utmost verge, his dart direct?
Shall aught obstruct it, or the path be clear?
Take which thou wilt: some substance choose, possest
Of power t' impede, and check its rapid race.
Or let it fly unconquered, nor restraint
E'en once encounter: thou must still confess
Th' entire of nature nought of limit knows.
Throughout the dart I'll chase; and when, at length,
Th' acceded bound is gained, I'll still demand
What yet obstructs it; still new proofs adduce
That the vast whole is boundless; and that flight
Still beyond flight for ever might be urged.
Were, too, th' entire of nature thus confined,
Thus circumscribed precise, from its own weight
Long since, all matter to the extremest depth
Had sunk supine: nor aught the skies beneath,
Nor skies themselves, with countless stars adorned
And sun's unsuffering splendour, had remained.
Down, down th' accumulated mass had fallen
From earliest time, devoid of power to rise.
But nought of rest supine material seeds
Evince through nature; since no depth exists
Extreme, and fathomable where those seeds
Might fix collected in inert repose.
All, all is action: the vast whole alike
Moves in each part; and, from material seeds,
Draws, undiminished, its eternal food.
Things, to the sense, are circumscribed by things.
Air bounds the hills, and hills the liquid air:
Earth ocean, ocean earth: but the vast whole
What fancied scene can bound? O'er its broad realm,
Immeasured, and immeasurably spread,
From age to age resplendent lightnings urge,
In vain their flight perpetual; distant, still,

And ever distant from the verge of things.
So vast the space on opening space that swells,
Through every part so infinite alike.
Ask thy own reason. It will prove at once
Th' entire of nature never can have bounds.
Void must perforce bound matter, matter void;
Thus mutual, one illimitable whole
Forming for ever. For were each of each
Free and unshackled, uncombined, and pure
In their own essence, not one short-lived hour
Could earth, or ocean, the refulgent fane
Of heaven sublime, or mortal forms, or those
The gods themselves inhabit, then subsist.
Freed from all order, disarranged, and rude,
Through boundless vacuum the drear mass of things
Would quick be borne: or, rather, nought had risen
From the crude chaos, joyless, and inert.
For never, doubtless, from result of thought,
Or mutual compact, could primordial seeds
First harmonize, or move with powers precise.
But ever changing, ever changed, and vext,
From earliest time, through ever-during space,
With ceaseless repercussion, every mode
Of motion, magnitude, and shape essayed;
At length th' unwieldly mass the form assumed
Of things created. Persevering, thus,
Through many an age, unnumbered springs the deep
Feed with perpetual tides: by the warm sun
Sustained, and cherished, earth renews her fruits,
And man, and beast survive; and ether glows
With living lights innum'rous: scenes throughout
'Twere vain t' expect, from all eternal time,
Had no primordial seeds, in stores immense,
Been ever nigh to renovate the world.
For as, of food deprived, the languid frame
Of man must perish, so th' entire of things
Must instant cease, should once primordial seeds

Their aid withhold, or deviate in their course.
Nor deem from mutual impulse, things with things
Can sole their forms preserve; th' eternal seeds
May, hence, be oft restrained, and e'en perchance,
Their flight delayed, till, from th' exhaustless store,
Fresh seeds arrive the fainting frame to feed:
But from concussion, frequent, they rebound,
Dissolve all tie, and leave to transient rest
The common matter whence each substance springs.
Hence must incalculable seeds exist
Ceaseless in act; and the vast whole derive
Alone from boundless matter impulse due.
 But fly, O Memmius, fly the sect deceived,
Who teach that things, with gravitation firm,
To the vast centre of th' entire, alike,
Unerring press: the world who fain would prove
Void of external impulse, may subsist,
And nought its post desert, profound, or high,
Since of such gravitating power possest.
For canst thou deem that aught may thus sustain,
And poise itself? that aught of solid weight,
Placed at earth's utmost depth, could upwards strive
Reversed; and to the surface—(in the stream
As spreads the downwards shadow)—still adhere?
For thus such sages hold: thus man, and beast
Subsist, they teach, inverted, earth beneath:
From their firm station, down their deeper skies
As unexposed to fall, as towards the heavens
Ourselves to mount sublime: by them the sun,
When night to us unfolds his stars, surveyed;
And equal measuring, in alternate course,
With us, their months, their darkness, and their day.
Such are the specious fancies error feigns,
In idle hour, to minds perverse and vain.
Where all is infinite, what spot precise
Can e'er be central? or were centre owned,
Why towards such spot should matter rather tend,

Than elsewhere more remote, and deeper still?
For vacant space, through every part alike,
Central or not, must yield to things compact,
And pond'rous, as their varying weight compels;
Nor through the boundless void one point exists
Where things may rest, as if of weight deprived.
No power it boasts t' uphold; but still recedes,
As Nature prompts, and opes the needed path.
Hence, by the love alone of centre struck,
Th' harmonious frame of things could ne'er be formed.
Moreo'er such sages urge not that the whole
Strives towards the centre equal; but terrene
Alone, and fluid matters; the deep main,
The mountain cataract, and the forms produced
From earth Dedalian: while the breezy air,
And the light flame, far from such centre stray,
Through ether trembling, and, with lambent fire,
Feeding, through time, the sun's refulgent blaze;
As feeds maternal earth the myriad forms
Of herbs, and trees, and animated life,
From her own bosom nurtured, and sustained.
Thus, too, they teach that heaven, with bound sublime,
Encircles all things, lest the world's wide walls,
And all enveloped, volatile as flame,
Burst every bond, and dissipate, and die:
Lest heaven in thunders perish, and below
The baseless earth forsake us, downward urged:
And loose, and lifeless, man's dissev'ring frame,
Mixt with the rushing wreck of earth, and skies,
Waste through all space profound; till nought remain,
Nought, in a moment, of all now surveyed,
But one blank void, one mass of seeds inert.
For once to act, when primal atoms fail,
Fail where they may, the doors of death are ope,
And the vast whole unbounded ruin whelms.
These subjects if, with trivial toil, thou scan,
Each, each illuming, midnight shall no more

Thy path obstruct; but Nature's utmost depths
Shine as the day: so things irradiate things.

Proemium

'Tis PLEASANT, safely to behold from shore
The rolling ship, and hear the tempest roar:
Not that another's pain is our delight;
But pains unfelt produce the pleasing sight.
'Tis pleasant also to behold from far
The moving legions mingled in the war:
But much more sweet thy lab'ring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortifi'd:
From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life, and blind:
To see vain fools ambitiously contend
For wit and pow'r; their last endeavours bend
T' outshine each other, waste their time and health
In search of honour, and pursuit of wealth.
O wretched man! in what a mist of life,
Inclos'd with dangers and with noisy strife,
He spends his little span; and overfeeds
His cramm'd desires with more than nature needs!
For nature wisely stints our appetite,
And craves no more than undisturb'd delight:
Which minds unmix'd with cares, and fears, obtain;
A soul serene, a body void of pain.
So little this corporeal frame requires;
So bounded are our natural desires,
That wanting all, and setting pain aside,
With bare privation sense is satisfied.
If golden sconces hang not on the walls,
To light the costly suppers and the balls;
If the proud palace shines not with the state
Of burnish'd bowls, and of reflected plate;

If well tun'd harps, nor the more pleasing sound
Of voices, from the vaulted roofs rebound;
Yet on the grass, beneath a poplar shade,
By the cool stream our careless limbs are lay'd;
With cheaper pleasures innocently bless'd,
When the warm spring with gaudy flow'rs is dress'd.
Nor will the raging fever's fire abate,
With golden canopies and beds of state:
But the poor patient will as soon be sound
On the hard mattress, or the mother ground.
Then since our bodies are not eas'd the more
By birth, or pow'r, or fortune's wealthy store,
'Tis plain, these useless toys of every kind
As little can relieve the lab'ring mind:
Unless we could suppose the dreadful sight
Of marshall'd legions moving to the fight,
Cou'd, with their sound and terrible array,
Expel our fears, and drive the thoughts of death away;
But, since the supposition vain appears,
Since clinging cares, and trains of inbred fears,
Are not with sounds to be affrighted thence,
But in the midst of pomp pursue the prince,
Not aw'd by arms, but in the presence bold,
Without respect to purple, or to gold;
Why shou'd not we these pageantries despise;
Whose worth but in our want of reason lies?
For life is all in wandring errours led;
And just as children are surpriz'd with dread,
And tremble in the dark, so riper years
Ev'n in broad daylight are possest with fears;
And shake at shadows fanciful and vain,
As those which in the breasts of children reign.
These bugbears of the mind, this inward hell,
No rays of outward sunshine can dispel;
But nature and right reason must display
Their beams abroad, and bring the darksome soul to day.

Invocation to Epicurus

O GLORY of the Greeks! who first didst chase
The mind's dread darkness with celestial day,
The worth illustrating of human life—
Thee, glad, I follow—with firm foot resolved
To tread the path imprinted by thy steps;
Not urged by competition, but, alone,
Studious thy toils to copy; for, in powers,
How can the swallow with the swan contend?
Or the young kid, all tremulous of limb,
Strive with the strength, the fleetness of the horse;
Thou, sire of science! with paternal truths
Thy sons enrichest: from thy peerless page,
Illustrious chief! as from the flowery field
Th' industrious bee culls honey, we alike
Cull many a golden precept—golden each—
And each most worthy everlasting life.
 For as the doctrines of thy godlike mind
Prove into birth how nature first uprose,
All terrors vanish; the blue walls of heaven
Fly instant—and the boundless void throughout
Teems with created things. Then too we trace
The powers immortal, and their blest abodes;
Scenes where the winds rage never—unobscured
By clouds, or snow white drifting,—and o'erspread
With laughing ether, and perennial day.
There nature fills each want, nor aught up-springs
To mar th' eternal harmony of soul.—
Yet nought exists of hell's infernal reign:
Nor hides the solid earth the scenes from sight
Spread through the void beneath.—On these vast themes
As deep I ponder, a sublime delight,
A sacred horror sways me—Nature thus

By thy keen skill through all her depths unveiled.
Since, then, we erst have sung the make minute
Of primal seeds; how, in spontaneous course
Re-active urged, their various figures fly,
And, hence, how all things into life ascend,
Next let our daring verse the frame unfold
Of soul, and reasoning mind;—and chase, far chase
Those fears of future torment that distract
Man's total being; with the gloom of death
Tinge all things; nor e'en suffer once the tide
Of present joy to flow serene and pure.
For though, full oft, men boast they far prefer
Death to disease, or infamy of name,
Assert they know the soul but springs from blood,
Or, if the humour urge them, is but air,
And hence, that useless all the lore we bring:—
Oft flows the boast from love of praise alone.
For when of home debarred, from every haunt
Of man cut off, with conscious guilt o'erpowered,
Midst every ill such boasters still survive:
Still fell new victims, and th' infernal powers
Implore with black oblations; through their breast
Religion thus with ten-fold force propelled.
Through doubtful dangers, hence, through straits severe
Pursue the race of man; then sole ascends
Truth from the lowliest bosom, then alone
Flies all profession, and the fact unfolds.
E'en restless avarice, and love of fame,
So oft to deeds unrighteous that seduce,
And spread the growing guilt from man to man.
By ceaseless toil urged on, and night and day,
Striving the crowd t' o'ertop—these pests of life
Draw half their vigour from the dread of death.
For infamy, contempt, and want severe,
These chief embitter mortals; these, they deem,
Death's foremost train; and, studious these to shun,
Far off they fly, still wand'ring from the right,

Urged on by fear, and kindle civil broils,
And murder heap on murder, doubling thus,
Ceaseless, their stores insatiate: raptured high
When breathes a brother his last, languid groan;
And with mistrust, through every nerve alarmed,
Joining the feast some jovial kinsman forms.
From the same source, the same deep dread of death.
Springs envy poisoning all things: mortals, hence,
Lament to power that this, to glory that,
Crown'd with the people's plaudits should ascend,
While all unnoticed, mid the crowd obscure
Themselves still jostle; pining every hour,
For names, for statues; and, full oft, so strong
From dread of death, hate they the light of heaven,
That, sick at heart, through their own breast they plunge
The fatal steel: heedless that this alone,
This pungent dread, engenders all their cares,
Nips the keen sense of shame—turns friends to foes,
And bursts the bonds that harmonize the heart.
For, goaded hence, hell ever in his sight,
Man oft betrays his country; and, for gold,
Yields up the reverend form that gave him birth.
For as the boy, when midnight veils the skies,
Trembles and starts at all things—so, full oft,
E'en in the noon, men start at forms as void
Of real danger as the phantoms false
By darkness conjured, and the schoolboy's dread.
A terror this the radiant darts of day
Can ne'er disperse, to truth's pure light alone,
And wisdom yielding, intellectual suns.

Against the Fear of Death

WHAT has this bugbear death to frighten man,
If souls can die, as well as bodies can?
For, as before our birth we felt no pain,

When Punic arms infested land and main,
When heaven and earth were in confusion hurl'd,
For the debated empire of the world,
Which aw'd with dreadful expectation lay,
Sure to be slaves, uncertain who shou'd sway:
So, when our mortal frame shall be disjoin'd,
The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,
From sense of grief and pain we shall be free;
We shall not feel, because we shall not be.
Though earth in seas, and seas in heav'n were lost,
We shou'd not move, we only shou'd be tost.
Nay, ev'n suppose when we have suffer'd fate,
The soul cou'd feel, in her divided state,
What's that to us? for we are only we
While souls and bodies in one frame agree.
Nay, tho' our atoms shou'd revolve by chance,
And matter leap into the former dance;
Tho' time our life and motion cou'd restore,
And make our bodies what they were before,
What gain to us wou'd all this bustle bring?
The new-made man wou'd be another thing;
When once an interrupting pause is made,
That individual being is decay'd.
We, who are dead and gone, shall bear no part
In all the pleasures, nor shall feel the smart,
Which to that other mortal shall accrew,
Whom, of our matter Time shall mould anew.
For backward if you look, on that long space
Of ages past, and view the changing face
Of matter, tost and variously combin'd
In sundry shapes, 'tis easy for the mind
From thence t' infer, that seeds of things have been
In the same order as they now are seen:
Which yet our dark remembrance cannot trace,
Because a pause of life, a gaping space,
Has come betwixt, where memory lies dead,
And all the wandring motions from the sense are fled.

For whosoe're shall in misfortunes live,
Must be, when those misfortunes shall arrive;
And since the man who is not, feels not woe,
(For death exempts him and wards off the blow,
Which we, the living, only feel and bear)
What is there left for us in death to fear?
When once that pause of life has come between,
'Tis just the same as we had never been.
And therefore if a man bemoan his lot,
That after death his mouldring limbs shall rot,
Or flames, or jaws of beasts devour his mass,
Know, he's an unsincere, unthinking ass.
A secret sting remains within his mind,
The fool is to his own cast offals kind.
He boasts no sense can after death remain;
Yet makes himself a part of life again;
As if some other he could feel the pain.
If, while he live, this thought molest his head,
What wolf or vulture shall devour me dead,
He wastes his days in idle grief, nor can
Distinguish 'twixt the body and the man;
But thinks himself can still himself survive:
And what when dead he feels not, feels alive.
Then he repines that he was born to die,
Nor knows in death there is no other he,
No living he remains his grief to vent,
And o'er his senseless carcass to lament.
If after death 'tis painful to be torn
By birds and beasts, then why not so to burn,
Or drench'd in floods of honey to be soak'd,
Imbalm'd to be at once preserv'd and chok'd;
Or on an airy mountain's top to lie,
Expos'd to cold and heav'n's inclemency;
Or crowded in a tomb to be opprest
With monumental marble on thy breast?
But to be snatch'd from all the household joys,
From thy chaste wife, and thy dear prattling boys,

Whose little arms about thy legs are cast,
And climbing for a kiss prevent their mother's hast,
Inspiring secret pleasure thro' thy breast,
All these shall be no more: thy friends opprest
Thy care and courage now no more shall free,
Ah wretch! thou cry'st, ah! miserable me;
One woeful day sweeps children, friends, and wife,
And all the brittle blessings of my life!
Add one thing more, and all thou say'st is true,
Thy want and wish of them is vanish'd too:
Which, well consider'd, were a quick relief,
To all thy vain imaginary grief.
For thou shalt sleep, and never wake again,
And, quitting life, shalt quit thy living pain.
But we, thy friends, shall all those sorrows find,
Which in forgetful death thou leav'st behind;
No time shall dry our tears, nor drive thee from our mind.
The worst that can befall thee, measur'd right,
Is a sound slumber, and a long good night.
Yet thus the fools, that would be thought the wits,
Disturb their mirth with melancholy fits:
When healths go round, and kindly brimmers flow,
'Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads glow,
They whine, and cry, let us make haste to live,
Short are the joys that human life can give.
Eternal preachers, that corrupt the draught,
And pall the God, that never thinks, with thought;
Idiots with all that thought, to whom the worst
Of death is want of drink, and endless thirst,
Or any fond desire as vain as these.
For, e'en in sleep, the body, wrapt in ease,
Supinely lies, as in the peaceful grave,
And wanting nothing, nothing can it crave.
Were that sound sleep eternal, it were death;
Yet the first atoms then, the seeds of breath,
Are moving near to sense; we do but shake
And rouse that sense, and straight we are awake.

Then death to us, and death's anxiety,
Is less than nothing, if a less could be.
For then our atoms, which in order lay,
Are scatter'd from their heap, and puff'd away,
And never can return into their place,
When once the pause of life has left an empty space.
And last, suppose great Nature's voice shou'd call
To thee, or me, or any of us all,
"What dost thou mean, ungrateful wretch, thou vain,
Thou mortal thing, thus idly to complain,
And sigh and sob, that thou shalt be no more?
For if thy life were pleasant heretofore,
If all the bounteous blessings, I cou'd give,
Thou hast enjoy'd, if thou hast known to live,
And pleasure not leak'd through thee like a sieve,
Why dost thou not give thanks as at a plenteous feast,
Cram'd to the throat with life, and rise and take thy rest?
But if my blessings thou hast thrown away,
If indigested joys pass'd thro', and wou'd not stay,
Why dost thou wish for more to squander still?
If life be grown a load, a real ill,
And I wou'd all thy cares and labours end,
Lay down thy burden, fool, and know thy friend.
To please thee, I have empti'd all my store,
I can invent, and can supply no more;
But run the round again, the round I ran before.
Suppose thou art not broken yet with years,
Yet still the self same scene of things appears,
And wou'd be ever, coud'st thou ever live;
For life is still but life, there's nothing new to give."
What can we plead against so just a bill?
We stand convicted, and our cause goes ill.
But if a wretch, a man opprest by fate,
Shou'd beg of Nature to prolong his date,
She speaks aloud to him with more disdain,
"Be still, thou martyr fool, thou covetous of pain."
But if an old decrepit sot lament;

"What thou" (she cries) "who hast outliv'd content!
Dost thou complain, who hast enjoy'd my store?
But this is still th' effect of wishing more.
Unsatisfy'd with all that Nature brings;
Loathing the present, liking absent things;
From hence it comes, thy vain desires, at strife
Within themselves, have tantaliz'd thy life.
And ghastly death appear'd before thy sight,
E're thou hadst gorg'd thy soul and senses with delight.
Now leave those joys, unsuiting to thy age,
To a fresh comer, and resign the stage."
Is Nature to be blam'd if thus she chide?
No sure; for 'tis her business to provide
Against this ever-changing frame's decay,
New things to come, and old to pass away.
One being, worn, another being makes;
Chang'd, but not lost; for Nature gives and takes:
New matter must be found for things to come,
And these must waste like those, and follow Nature's doom
All things, like thee, have time to rise and rot;
And from each other's ruin are begot:
For life is not confin'd to him or thee:
'Tis giv'n to all for use, to none for property.
Consider former ages past and gone,
Whose circles ended long ere thine begun,
Then tell me fool, what part in them thou hast?
Thus may'st thou judge the future by the past.
What horrour seest thou in that quiet state,
What bugbear dreams to fright thee after fate?
No ghost, no gobblins, that still passage keep;
But all is there serene, in that eternal sleep.
For all the dismal tales that poets tell,
Are verify'd on earth, and not in Hell.
No Tantalus looks up with fearful eye
Or dreads th' impending rock to crush him from on high:
But fear of chance on earth disturbs our easy hours,
Or vain imagin'd wrath of vain imagin'd pow'rs.

No Tityus torn by vultures lies in Hell;
Nor cou'd the lobes of his rank liver swell
To that prodigious mass, for their eternal meal:
Not tho' his monstrous bulk had cover'd o'er
Nine spreading acres, or nine thousand more;
Not tho' the globe of earth had been the Giant's floor
Nor in eternal torments could he lie:
Nor could his corpse sufficient food supply.
But he's the Tityus, who by love opprest,
Or tyrant passion preying on his breast,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robb'd of rest.
The Sisiphus is he, whom noise and strife
Seduce from all the soft retreats of life,
To vex the government, disturb the laws:
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause,
He courts the giddy crowd to make him great,
And sweats and toils in vain, to mount the sovereign seat.
For still to aim at pow'r and still to fail,
Ever to strive, and never to prevail,
What is it, but, in reason's true account
To heave the stone against the rising mount?
Which urg'd, and labour'd, and forc'd up with pain,
Recoils, and rolls impetuous down, and smokes along the plain.
Then still to treat thy ever-craving mind
With ev'ry blessing, and of ev'ry kind,
Yet never fill thy rav'ning appetite;
Though years and seasons vary thy delight,
Yet nothing to be seen of all the store,
But still the wolf within thee barks for more;
This is the fable's moral, which they tell
Of fifty foolish virgins damn'd in Hell
To leaky vessels, which the liquor spill;
To vessels of their sex, which none cou'd ever fill.
As for the Dog, the Furies, and their Snakes
The gloomy caverns, and the burning lakes,
And all the vain infernal trumpery,

They neither are, nor were, nor e'er can be.
But here on earth, the guilty have in view
The mighty pains to mighty mischiefs due;
Racks, prisons, poisons, the Tarpeian Rock,
Stripes, hangmen, pitch, and suffocating smoke;
And last, and most, if these were cast behind,
Th' avenging horrour of a conscious mind,
Whose deadly fear anticipates the blow,
And sees no end of punishment and woe;
But looks for more, at the last gasp of breath:
This makes an Hell on earth, and life a death.
Mean time when thoughts of death disturb thy head;
Consider, Ancus great and good is dead;
Ancus thy better far, was born to die;
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality?
So many monarchs with their mighty state,
Who rul'd the world, were over-rul'd by fate.
That haughty king, who lorded o'er the main,
And whose stupendous bridge did the wild waves restrain,
(In vain they foam'd, in vain they threatned wreck,
While his proud legions march'd upon their back:)
Him death, a great monarch, overcame;
Nor spar'd his guards the more, for their immortal name.
The Roman chief, the Carthaginian dread,
Scipio, the thunder bolt of war, is dead,
And like a common slave, by fate in triumph led.
The founders of invented arts are lost;
And wits who made eternity their boast.
Where now is Homer, who possest the throne?
Th' immortal work remains, the mortal author's gone.
Democritus, perceiving age invade,
His body weakn'd, and his mind decay'd,
Obey'd the summons with a cheerful face;
Made haste to welcome death, and met him half the race.
That stroke ev'n Epicurus cou'd not bar,
Though he in wit surpass'd mankind, as far
As does the midday sun the midnight star.

And thou, dost thou disdain to yield thy breath,
Whose very life is little more than death?
More than one half by lazy sleep possest;
And when awake, thy soul but nods at best,
Day-dreams and sickly thoughts revolving in thy breast.
Eternal troubles haunt thy anxious mind,
Whose cause and cure thou never hop'st to find;
But still uncertain, with thyself at strife,
Thou wander'st in the labyrinth of life.
O! if the foolish race of man, who find
A weight of cares still pressing on their mind,
Cou'd find as well the cause of this unrest,
And all this burden lodg'd within the breast;
Sure they wou'd change their course, nor live as now,
Uncertain what to wish or what to vow.
Uneasy both in country and in town,
They search a place to lay their burden down.
One, restless in his palace, walks abroad,
And vainly thinks to leave behind the load:
But straight returns; for he's as restless there:
And finds there's no relief in open air.
Another to his villa wou'd retire,
And spurs as hard as if it were on fire
No sooner enter'd at his country door,
But he begins to stretch, and yawn, and snore;
Or seeks the city which he left before.
Thus every man o'er works his weary will,
To shun himself, and to shake off his ill:
The shaking fit returns, and hangs upon him still.
No prospect of repose, nor hope of ease;
The wretch is ignorant of his disease;
Which known wou'd all his fruitless trouble spare;
For he wou'd know the world not worth his care;
Then wou'd he search more deeply for the cause;
And study Nature well, and Nature's laws:
For in this moment lies not the debate,
But on our future, fix'd, eternal state;

That never changing state, which all must keep,
Whom death has doom'd to everlasting sleep.
Why are we then so fond of mortal life,
Beset with dangers, and maintain'd with strife?
A life, which all our care can never save;
One fate attends us; and one common grave.
Besides, we tread but a perpetual round;
We ne'er strike out, but beat the former ground,
And the same mawkish joys in the same track are found.
For still we think an absent blessing best,
Which cloys, and is no blessing when possest,
A new arising wish expells it from the breast.
The fev'rish thirst of life increases still;
We call for more and more, and never have our fill,
Yet know not what to-morrow we shall try,
What dregs of life in the last draught may lie:
Nor, by the longest life we can attain,
One moment from the length of death we gain,
For all behind belongs to his eternal reign.
When once the Fates have cut the mortal thread,
The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so,
As he who died a thousand years ago.

Sex and Love

Or when, at length, the full ripe hour is reach'd
Of vigorous manhood, and the genital stores
Crowd through the members, ceaseless then, at night,
Forms of the fair, of look and hue divine,
Rush on the spirit, and the ducts of love
So stimulate, where throngs the new-born tide,
That, as the tender toil were all achiev'd,
Full flows the stream, and drowns the snowy vest.
For, as we erst have sung, the seeds of life
First spring when manhood first the frame confirms.

And as on various functions various powers
Alone can act propulsive, human seeds
By nought but human beauty can be rous'd.
These, when once gender'd from their cells minute
O'er every limb, o'er every organ spread,
Crowd in full concourse tow'rds the nervous fount
By nature rear'd appropriate; whence abrupt
Excite they oft, as forms of beauty rise,
The scenes at hand, the regions ruled by love.
Then springs the tender tumour, the warm wish
Full o'er the foe, the luscious wound who deals,
With dext'rous aim to pour the high-wrought charge,
And full contending in the genial fight.
So falls the victim on the part assail'd:
With the red blood the glist'ning bruise so swells;
And o'er th' assassin flows the tide he draws.
 So he who feels the shaft of love propell'd
From the dear form that charms him, tow'rds the spot
Aims, whence the wound proceeds; supreme he pants
To join the contest, and from frame to frame
Pour the rich humour; for the fierce desire,
Now felt, assures how vast the bliss to come.
This, this is Venus: this he deems true love;
Hence flow the drops delicious that the heart
Erode hereafter, and its train of cares.
For, though the form adored be absent, still
Her phantoms haunt the lover, and his ear
Rings with her name, whate'er the path pursued.
 Yet fly such phantoms, from the food of love
Abstain, libidinous; to worthier themes
Turn, turn thy spirit; let the race at large
Thy liberal heart divide, nor lavish, gross,
O'er one fond object thy exhausted strength,
Gend'ring long cares, and certain grief at last.
For love's deep ulcer fed, grows deeper still,
Rank, and more pois'nous; and each coming day
Augments the madness, if the wretch, perchance,

Heal not old wounds by those of newer date,
From fair to fair wide-wand'ring, or his mind
Turn from such subjects to pursuits unlike.
Nor are the joys of love from those shut out
Who brutal lust avoid; the pure of heart
Far surer pleasures, and of nobler kind,
Reap, than the wretch of lewd and low desires,
Who, in the moment of enjoyment's self,
Still fluctuates with a thousand fears subdued;
O'er the fair wanton, dubious, long who hangs,
What charm his eyes, his hands shall first devour:
Till fixt, at length, with furious force the spot
Painful he presses, through his luscious lips
Drives his keen teeth, and every kiss indents;
Striving in vain for joys unmix'd, and urg'd
By latent stimulus the part to wound,
Where'er its seat, that frenzies thus his soul.
But Venus softly smooths the wrongs endur'd,
And mutual pleasures check the lover's rage
Then hopes he, too, in the same form to quench
The madd'ning fires where first the flame arose.
Vain hope, by every fact disproved; for this,
The more the soul possesses, still the more
Craves she with keenest ardour. Foods and drinks,
As through the frame they pass, by toil worn out,
Fill many a huge interstice; obvious whence
Dies the dread sense of hunger and of thirst;
But human beauty, and the rosy cheek,
With nought the panting lover can endow
But fruitless hopes, but images unsound,
Scatter'd by every wind. As, oft, the man,
Parch'd up with thirst, amid his dreams to drink
Strives, but in vain, since nought around him flows
But void, unreal semblances of floods;
So with her votaries sports the power of love,
False phantoms sole presenting, nor can sight,
Where'er it rove, be sated with the gaze,

Nor can the lover's lawless fingers tear
Aught from his idol, o'er her as he hangs,
And the full power of every charm explores.
E'en when, in youth's prime flower, his panting frame
Enclasps her frame that pants, when all his soul
Expects the coming bliss, and Venus waits
To sow the fertile field, though then amain
In amorous fold he press her, lip to lip
Join, and drink deep the dulcet breath she heaves,
'Tis useless all; for still his utmost rage
Can nought subtract, nor through the fair one force
His total frame, commingled with herself.
Yet oft thus strives he, or thus seems to strive;
So strong the toils that bind him, so complete
Melt all his members in the sea of love.
And though, when now the full-collected shock
Pours from the nerves, some transient pause ensue,
Yet short its period; the fond fever soon,
The frenzy quick returns, and the mad wretch
Still pants to press that which he press'd before;
Nor aught of antidote exists, so deep
Pines he, perplext, beneath the latent ill.
Then, too, his form consumes, the toils of love
Waste all his vigour, and his days roll on
In vilest bondage. Amply though endow'd,
His wealth decays, his debts with speed augment,
The post of duty never fills he more,
And all his sick'ning reputation dies.
Meanwhile rich unguents from his mistress laugh,
Laugh from her feet soft Sicyon's shoes superb;
The green-ray'd emerald o'er her, dropt in gold,
Gleams large and numerous; and the sea-blue silk,
Deep-worn, enclasps her, with the moisture drunk
Of love illicit. What his sires amass'd
Now flaunts in ribands, in tiaras flames
Full o'er her front, and now to robes converts
Of Chian loose, or Alidonian mould;

While feasts and festivals of boundless pomp,
And costliest viands, garlands, odours, wines,
And scatter'd roses ceaseless are renew'd.
But fruitless every art; some bitter still
Wells forth perpetual from his fount of bliss,
And poisons every flow'ret. Keen remorse
Goads him, perchance, for dissipated time,
And months on months destroy'd; or from the fair
Haply some phrase of doubtful import darts,
That, like a living coal, his heart corrodes;
Or oft her eyes wide wander, as he deems,
And seek some happier rival, while the smile
Of smother'd love half-dimples o'er her cheeks.
Such are the ills that on amours attend
Most blest and prosp'rous; but on those adverse
Throng myriads daily, obvious and more keen.
Hence, by the muse forewarn'd, with studious heed
Shun thou the toils that wait; for easier far
Those toils to shun, than, when thy foot once slides,
To break th' entangling meshes and be free.
Yet though insnar'd, and in the silly net
Led captive, thou may'st still, if firm of mind,
And by these numbers sway'd, thy foot release.
First the defects, then, of the form ador'd,
Of mind, of body, let thy memory ne'er
One hour forget; for these full oft mankind
See not, by passion blinded; while, revers'd,
Charms they bestow which never were the fair's.
Hence frequent view we those, each grace denied,
The coarse, the crooked, held in high esteem.
And lovers laugh o'er lovers, and exhort
Offerings to Venus since so vilely sway'd,
While yet themselves are sway'd more vilely still.
To such the black assume a lovely brown;
The rank and filthy, negligence and ease;
The red-eyed is a Pallas; the firm-limb'd,
All bone, a bounding roe; the pigmy dwarf,

A sprightly grace, all energy and wit;
The huge and bulky, dignified and grand;
The stammerer lisps; the silent is sedate;
The pert virago, spirit all and fire;
The hectic, fine and delicate of frame;
The victim worn with pulmonary cough,
On life's last verge, a maid of matchless waist;
The broad, big-bosom'd, Ceres full display'd,
As from the bed of Bacchus; the flat-nos'd
Of monkey shape, a Satyr from the woods,
And the broad-lipp'd, a Nymph for kisses form'd.
 But countless such conceits, and to narrate
Idle; yet grant the frame ador'd possess'd
Of face divine, that all the power of love
Plays o'er each limb symphonious, others still
Exist of equal beauty; still ourselves
Once liv'd without her; and full well we know
She, too, each art essays the baser need,
And so with scents bedaubs her that her maids
Far fly oppress'd, and vent their smother'd laugh.
 Then, too, the wretched lover oft abroad
Bars she, who at her gate loud weeping stands,
Kissing the walls that clasp her; with perfumes
Bathing the splendid portals, and around
Scattering rich wreaths and odoriferous flowers.
Yet when at length admitted, the first breath
So deep offends him, he some motive seeks
Instant to quit her; his long-labour'd speech
Of suffering drops, and owns himself a fool,
That for one moment he could deem her crown'd
With charms the race of mortals ne'er can boast.
This know full well the Paphian nymphs, and, deep
Behind the scenes of action, each defect
Strive they to hide from him they fain would sway.
But vain th' attempt; for oft the mind will guess
The latent blemish, and the laugh unfold.
Whence those of soul ingenuous frankly own,

Frequent, those faults which none can all escape.
Yet not for ever do the softer sex
Feign joys they feel not, as with close embrace,
Breast join'd to breast, their paramours they clasp,
And print their humid kisses on their lips.
Oft from their hearts engage they, urg'd amain
By mutual hopes to run the race of love.
Thus nature prompts; by mutual hopes alone,
By bliss assur'd, birds, beasts, and grazing herds,
The task essay; nor would the female else
E'er bear the burden of the vigorous male,
By mutual joys propell'd. Hast thou not seen,
Hence tempted, how in mutual bonds they strive
Work'd oft to madness? how the race canine
Stain with their vagrant loves the public streets,
Diversely dragging, and the chain obscene
Tugging to loose, while yet each effort fails?
Toils they would ne'er essay if unassur'd
Of mutual bliss, and cheated to the yoke.
Whence o'er and o'er the bliss must mutual prove.
If when the male his genital energy
Imparts, the female deep her breath retract
Transported most, the race produc'd will, then,
From female store prove female; if revers'd,
From store paternal, male. But when the form
Blends both its parents' features, it ascends
From equal powers of each; the impulse warm
Rousing alike, through each conflicting frame,
The seeds of latent life in scale so nice
That neither conquers, nor to conquest yields.
Oft view we, too, the living lines portray'd
Of ancestors remote; for various seeds,
Commingled various, through the parent frame
Lurk, which from race to race preserve entire
The form, the features of the anterior stock.
Diversely such the power creative blends;
Whence oft the voice revives, the hair, the hue,

The full complexion of the race deceas'd;
For these as sure from seeds defin'd ascend
As e'en the face, the body, or the limbs.
Then, too, though male the fetus, female stores
Aid the production; while, if female form'd,
The tide paternal mixes in the make;
For both must join, or nought can e'er ensue.
But obvious this, that when the semblance more
Inclines to either, the prevailing sex
Chief lent the seeds of life, and rear'd complete
The virgin embryo, or incipient man.
 Nor ever interfere the gods above
In scenes like these, the genital soil lock up,
Or curse with barren love the man unblest,
No lovely race who boasts to hail him sire,—
As deem the many, who, in sadness drown'd,
Oft offer victims, and, with fragrant gums,
Kindle the blazing altar, wearying heav'n
Vainly, to fill the void reluctant womb.
For blank sterility from seeds ascends
Too gross, or too attenuate; if the last,
Ne'er to the regions that generic spread
Cleave they, rejected instant as propell'd.
But if too gross the genital atoms, dull
Move they, and spiritless, or never urg'd
With force sufficient, or of power devoid
The puny ducts to pierce, or, pierc'd, to blend
Harmonious with the vital fluid found.
For love harmonious, whence increase alone
Can spring, oft differs largely; easier far
Some filling some, and others easier fill'd
And gravid made by others; whence, at times,
Those, many a Hymen who have erst essay'd
Vainly, at length th' appropriate stores acquire,
And feel the lovely load their wombs enrich.
While he, perchance, whose prior banns forbade
All the fond hope of offspring, happier now

A mate has found of more concordant powers,
And boasts a race to prop his crumbling age.
So much imports it that the seeds of life
With seeds should mix symphonious, that the gross
Condense the rare, the rare the gross dilute,
And man with woman duly pair'd unite.
Much, too, concerns it what the foods employ'd;
For some augment the genital stores, and some
Dissolve their crasis, and all power destroy.
Nor small the moment in what mode is dealt
The bland delight. The sage who views minute
Herds, and the savage tribes by nature led,
Holds that the virtuous matron chief conceives,
When, with subsiding chest, and loins erect,
Her dulcet charms she offers, fittest then
The luscious tide t' absorb; for nought avail
Exerted motions, the perpetual heave
Of frame high-strain'd, and ever-labouring lungs
These, rather, urg'd beneath the tender fray,
All fruit prohibit; since the genital share
Oft turn they from the furrow as it holds
Its course direct, and break th' impinging shock.
And hence the wanton mistress acts like these
Frequent indulges, to preclude increase,
And more transport the lawless form she clasps:
Arts the chaste matron never needs essay.
Nor from the darts of Venus, nor the smile
Of gods above, is she of homelier make
Frequent belov'd; the praise is all her own.
By her own deeds, by cleanliness most chaste,
And sweet consenting manners, the delight
Lives she of him who blends his lot with hers.
Such virtues must prevail, and day o'er day
Perfect their power; for, though of gentlest kind,
Yet urg'd perpetual, such the sternest heart
Must gradual soften, and at length subdue.

Hast thou not seen the fountain's falling drops
Scoop in long time the most obdurate stone?

Against Teleology and Permanence

WHO, FROM his burning breast, a strain may strike
Meet for the boundless majesty of things?
Things now developed? who, in words alone,
May pour forth praises worthy his desert
Whose matchless mind such wonders first disclosed?
No mortal, doubtless. For, of things explored,
Such the majestic dignity, the sage
Must, so to speak, have been a god indeed:
A god, illustrious Memmius! he who first
The rules of life devised, now termed by all,
Sole, solid wisdom; he whose happy art
From such wild waves, such shades of ten-fold night,
Leads us to truth, tranquillity, and day.
 What are to him the gods of earlier times?
Ceres, who taught the fruits of earth to rear,
As fame reports? or Bacchus, first who stole
The vine's purpureal spirit? foods mankind
Without may flourish, and, through many a clime,
This moment know not; but of virtue void,
And purity of heart, man ill can thrive.
Hence ampler far his claim to rites divine
Whose dulcet solaces whole nations feel,
Soothing the wounded spirit as they flow.
 Should'st thou with him e'en Hercules compare,
Famed for exploits, from reason far thou err'st.
For what were now to us, with all their threats,
Nemaea's lion, or th' Arcadian boar?
The bull of Crete, or hydra-headed snake
That reared, o'er Lerna's banks, his dreadful fangs?
Or what to us the triple-breasted strength

Of three-faced Geryon, or the horses wild
Of Diomed, o'er Ismara, and Thrace,
And all Bistonia, snorting ceaseless fire?
What woes could these now menace? or the birds
With huge, uncleanly talons that defiled
The climes of Arcady? or, feller still,
Th' enormous dragon that, with eye severe,
Clung round the tree of vegetable gold,
And in Hesperia kept the glittering fruit?
How now could such affect us? fixt remote
O'er boundless seas, beyond th' Atlantic shores,
Where never mortal else, refined or rude,
Dared urge his desperate sail? E'en though alive,
Unconquered still, from monsters such as these
What need we dread? Nought, doubtless, or I err.
For savage monsters crowd the world e'en now,
Fearful and gaunt; and hills, and groves remote,
And pathless woods re-echo to their roar;
Scenes, still, our feet with ease may ever shun.
But, with the mind unpurged, what tumults dire,
What dangers inly rage! what hosts of cares,
From various lusts, convulse the total man!
What terrors throng! what dread destruction flows
From pomp, pride, passion, indolence, and vice!
He, then, that these o'erpowers, and from the breast
Drives, not by arms, but precepts sage and pure—
Say—ought not this man with the gods to rank?
Since of themselves, too, and in strain divine,
Much to the race of mortals he disclosed,
And oped the nature of created things.
His steps I follow; and, by him illumed,
Unlock the laws whence first the world uprose;
Laws that still guide it, and to utmost time
Will guide resistless; whence the human soul
Was stampt corporeal, impotent to live
Age after age triumphant o'er decay,
Proving that nought but phantoms cheat the mind,

When oft in sleep we deem the dead appear.
What then, in order, waits us but to sing
How Nature's perishable system sprang,
As sure of fate as erst of natal hour;
How, from the mass material, heaven and earth,
Sun, moon, and stars, harmonious swelled to life;
What animated tribes, from age to age,
Have peopled space, and what have never lived:
Whence man, in various tongues, the power possessed
Of naming all surveyed; whence the deep fear,
Felt through the soul, of potentates divine,
Urging the nations to the culture dread
Of lakes, groves, altars, images, and fanes.
Ours, too, the task to show how Nature bends,
With power presiding, the reluctant sun
And moon through all their courses; lest thou deem
These of themselves, 'twixt heaven and earth, fulfil
Their ceaseless rounds; renewing, as they roll,
Fruits, and the sentient tribes; or hold the gods
Guide the vast frame, unwearied, and unseen.
For he who justly deems th' immortals live
Safe, and at ease, yet fluctuates in his mind
How things are swayed, how chiefly those discerned
In heaven sublime,—to superstition back
Lapses, and rears a tyrant host, and, then,
Conceives, dull reasoner! they can all things do;
While yet himself nor knows what may be done
Nor what may never; Nature powers defined
Stamping on all, and bounds that none can pass.
First, to delay no more then, we maintain
That earth, air, ocean, these stupendous scenes,
These triple bodies so diversely reared,
These, Memmius! these one common day shall doom
To utter ruin; when, for ages propt,
The world's vast system shall itself dissolve.
Nor hid from me how new the creed we teach,
How wondrous to the mind, that heaven and earth

Should perish ever; or how hard the task
By words alone such tenets to confirm
For thus thou e'er wilt find it when thy tongue
Opes some fresh subject sight has ne'er surveyed,
Nor touch developed, the main roads belief
Treads to the breast, and temple of the mind.
Yet will I strive; facts, haply, shall themselves
Aid me, and thou the world's vast fabric own
By dread convulsions shortly must be shook.
May fortune's smile this hour from us avert!
And truth, not feeling, the tremendous roar
Teach, with which all to ruin then shall rush!
Yet on this theme before the muse unlock
Her mystic treasures, sager and more true
Than e'er the Pythian maid, with laurels crowned,
Spoke from the tripod at Apollo's shrine,—
Some salutary precepts would I add,
Lest, chained by superstition, thou should'st deem
Heaven, earth, and ocean, sun, moon, stars exist
Gods in their frame, and of eternal date,
And fear for those the vengeance that pursued
The race gigantic, who, with lettered lore,
Shake the world's walls, the radiant eye of heaven
Quench, and th' immortals sketch in mortal terms.
For these, so far from arrogating, proud,
Celestial honours, and the rank of gods,
Full proof exhibit, rather, how devoid
Of vital action matter may exist,
And that not every compound frame alike
Boasts the high powers of intellect and mind.
Trees not in ether, not in ocean clouds,
Nor in the fields can fishes e'er exist;
Nor blood in planks, nor vital juice in stones;
But all springs definite in scenes defined.
So in the bosom lives, and there alone,
Mixt with its blood and nerves, the secret mind.
There only lives; for, could it roam at all,

Then rather should we through the body's self,
The heel or shoulder, or where else it chose,
Oft trace it wandering than forlorn abroad.
Since, e'en in body then, the soul and mind,
Are fixt thus definite, we amply prove
That out of body, and a reasoning frame,
In putrid glebes of earth, or solar fire,
In air, or water, sense can never dwell.
And hence these ne'er divinity can boast,
Since e'en devoid of animated life.
Nor deem the sacred mansion of the gods
O'er aught extend of this material frame:
For their immortal nature, far removed
From human sense, from matter gross and dull,
Scarce by the mind's pure spirit can be traced.
Hence, as no touch of matter these can reach,
Their finer textures never can impress
Material objects, for whate'er exists
Intangible, itself can never touch.
And, thus, th' immortal regions must from ours
Wide vary, congruous to their purer frames:
As soon the muse in ampler verse shall prove.
T' assert moreo'er the gods for mortal man
Reared this vast fabric, and that duty, hence,
Bids us extol the workmanship divine,
Deem it immortal, and of deathless date,
And that most impious is it to arraign
Aught thus constructed by the gods themselves
From earliest time, for man's perpetual use;
Most impious, though in words alone, to shake
The world's firm basis,—such conceits to feign,
To talk thus idly, Memmius, is to rave.
For what vast gain can e'er th' immortal powers,
Blest in themselves, from human praise derive
To rouse them in our favour? what new hope,
Such ages after of unsullied peace,
Could tempt them once to linger for a change?

New scenes to welcome, joyless proves the past;
But where no ill can rise, where every hour,
Age after age, propitious still must glide,
How can the breast here burn for what is new?
Dragged they their lives in darkness, then, and woe
Till sprang th' illumined world? or, if ne'er born,
What cause could man have marshalled for complaint?
Born, it behoves him, doubtless, to remain
In life while life one blessing can afford;
But what of vital joy ne'er tasted, ne'er
Ranked with the living, how can such object,
And with what reason, that it ne'er was formed?
 Whence could the gods the model, too, deduce
Of things create, the portraiture of man?
Or in their minds how first the notion spring?
Whence, too, the powers of atoms could they learn,
Changing their act as in position changed,
If nature ne'er the visual world had reared?
Atoms, innumerous, that in countless modes,
From time eternal have been so convulsed
By repercussions, by intrinsic weight
So urged and altered, and, in every form
Combined, evincing still some action new,
In every mass some effort to create,
That nought stupendous seems it they, at length,
Should gain those stations, those connexions gain,
Whence sprang th' entire of all things, and subsists.
 E'en though the rise of things I ne'er could prove,
Yet dare I, from the heaven's defective frame,
And many a scene alike perverse, affirm
No power divine this mass material reared
With ills so gross, so palpable to sight.

VIRGIL

Tityrus and Meliboeus

MELIBOEUS

BENEATH the shade which beechen boughs diffuse,
You, Tityrus, entertain your silvan muse.
Round the wide world in banishment we roam,
Forc'd from our pleasing fields and native home;
While, stretch'd at ease, you sing your happy loves,
And Amaryllis fills the shady groves.

TITYRUS

These blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd;
For never can I deem him less than God.
The tender firstlings of my woolly breed
Shall on his holy altar often bleed.
He gave my kine to graze the flow'ry plain,
And to my pipe renew'd the rural strain.

MELIBOEUS

I envy not your fortune, but admire,
That, while the raging sword and wasteful fire
Destroy the wretched neighbourhood around,
No hostile arms approach your happy ground.
Far diff'rent is my fate: my feeble goats
With pains I drive from their forsaken cotes.
And this, you see, I scarcely drag along,
Who, yeaning, on the rocks has left her young;
The hope and promise of my failing fold.
My loss, by dire portents, the gods foretold;

For, had I not been blind, I might have seen:—
Yon riven oak, the fairest of the green,
And the hoarse raven, on the blasted bough,
By croaking from the loft, presag'd the coming blow.
But tell me, Tityrus, what heav'nly pow'r
Preserv'd your fortunes in that fatal hour?

TITYRUS

Fool that I was, I thought imperial Rome
Like Mantua, where on market-days we come,
And thither drive our tender lambs from home.
So kids and whelps their sires and dams express;
And so the great I measur'd by the less.
But country towns, compar'd with her, appear
Like shrubs, when lofty cypresses are near.

MELIBOEUS

What great occasion call'd you hence to Rome?

TITYRUS

Freedom, which came at length, though slow to come.
Nor did my search of liberty begin,
Till my black hairs were chang'd upon my chin;
Nor Amaryllis would vouchsafe a look,
Till Galatea's meaner bonds I broke.
Till then, a helpless, hopeless, homely swain,
I sought not freedom, nor aspir'd to gain:
Though many a victim from my folds was bought,
And many a cheese to country markets brought,
Yet all the little that I got, I spent,
And still return'd as empty as I went.

MELIBOEUS

We stood amaz'd to see your mistress mourn,
Unknowing that she pin'd for your return:
We wonder'd why she kept her fruit so long,
For whom so late th' ungather'd apples hung.

But now the wonder ceases, since I see
She kept them only, Tityrus, for thee.
For thee the bubbling springs appear'd to mourn,
And whisp'ring pines made vows for thy return.

TITYRUS

What should I do?—While here I was enchain'd,
No glimpse of godlike liberty remain'd;
Nor could I hope, in any place but there,
To find a god so present to my pray'r.
There first the youth of heav'nly birth I view'd,
For whom our monthly victims are renew'd.
He heard my vows, and graciously decreed
My grounds to be restor'd, my former flocks to feed.

MELIBOEUS

O fortunate old man! whose farm remains—
For you sufficient—and requites your pains;
Though rushes overspread the neighb'ring plains;
Though here the marshy grounds approach your fields,
And there the soil a stony harvest yields.
Your teeming ewes shall no strange meadows try,
Nor fear a rot from tainted company.
Behold! yon bord'ring fence of sallow-trees
Is fraught with flow'rs; the flow'rs are fraught with bees
The busy bees, with a soft murm'ring strain,
Invite to gentle sleep the lab'ring swain.
While, from the neighb'ring rock, with rural songs,
The pruner's voice the pleasing dream prolongs,
Stock-doves and turtles tell their am'rous pain,
And, from the lofty elms, of love complain.

TITYRUS

Th' inhabitants of seas and skies shall change,
And fish on shore, and stags in air, shall range,
The banish'd Parthian dwell on Arar's brink,
And the blue German shall the Tigris drink,

Ere I, forsaking gratitude and truth,
Forget the figure of that godlike youth.

MELIBOEUS

But we must beg our bread in climes unknown,
Beneath the scorching or the freezing zone:
And some to far Oaxis shall be sold,
Or try the Libyan heat, or Scythian cold,
The rest among the Britons be confin'd;
A race of men from all the world disjoin'd.
O! must the wretched exiles ever mourn,
Nor, after length of rolling years, return?
Are we condemn'd by fate's unjust decree,
No more our houses and our homes to see?
Or shall we mount again the rural throne,
And rule the country kingdoms, once our own?
Did we for these barbarians plant and sow?
On these, on these, our happy fields bestow?
Good heav'n! what dire effects from civil discord flow!
Now let me graft my pears, and prune the vine,
The fruit is theirs, the labour only mine.
Farewell, my pastures, my paternal stock,
My fruitful fields, and my more fruitful flock!
No more, my goats, shall I behold you climb
The steepy cliffs, or crop the flow'ry thyme;
No more, extended in the grot below,
Shall see you browsing, on the mountain's brow,
The prickly shrubs; and after, on the bare,
Lean down the deep abyss, and hang in air.
No more my sheep shall sip the morning dew;
No more my song shall please the rural crew.
Adieu, my tuneful pipe! and all the world, adieu!

TITYRUS

This night, at least, with me forget your care;
Chestnuts and curds and cream shall be your fare:
The carpet-ground shall be with leaves o'erspread;

And boughs shall weave a cov'ring for your head.
For, see, yon sunny hill the shade extends;
And curling smoke from cottages ascends.

Alexis

YOUNG Corydon, th' unhappy shepherd swain,
The fair Alexis lov'd, but lov'd in vain;
And underneath the beechen shade, alone,
Thus to the woods and mountains made his moan.
 Is this, unkind Alexis, my reward?
And must I die unpitied, and unheard?
Now the green lizard in the grove is laid;
The sheep enjoy the coolness of the shade;
And Thestylis wild thyme and garlic beats
For harvest hinds, o'erspent with toil and heats.
While in the scorching sun I trace in vain
Thy flying footsteps o'er the burning plain;
The creaking locusts with my voice conspire;
They fry'd with heat, and I with fierce desire.
How much more easy was it to sustain
Proud Amaryllis, and her haughty reign,
The scorns of young Menalcas, once my care,
Though he was black, and thou art heav'nly fair!
Trust not too much to that enchanting face:
Beauty's a charm; but soon the charm will pass.
White lilies lie neglected on the plain,
While dusky hyacinths for use remain.
My passion is thy scorn; nor wilt thou know
What wealth I have, what gifts I can bestow;
What stores my dairies and my folds contain—
A thousand lambs, that wander on the plain;
New milk, that, all the winter, never fails,
And, all the summer, overflows the pails.
Amphion sung not sweeter to his herd,
When summon'd stones the Theban turrets rear'd.

Nor am I so deform'd; for late I stood
Upon the margin of the briny flood:
The winds were still; and, if the glass be true,
With Daphnis I may vie, though judg'd by you.
O! leave the noisy town: O! come and see
Our country cots, and live content, with me,
To wound the flying deer, and from their cotes,
With me, to drive a-field the browsing goats;
To pipe and sing, and, in our country strain,
To copy, or perhaps contend with, Pan.
Pan taught to join with wax unequal reeds:
Pan loves the shepherds, and their flocks he feeds.
Nor scorn the pipe: Amyntas, to be taught,
With all his kisses would my skill have bought.
Of sev'n smooth joints a mellow pipe I have,
Which with his dying breath Damoetas gave,
And said, "This, Corydon, I leave to thee;
For only thou deserv'st it after me."
His eyes Amyntas durst not upward lift;
For much he grudg'd the praise, but more the gift.
Besides, two kids, that in the valley stray'd,
I found by chance, and to my fold convey'd:
They drain two bagging udders ev'ry day;
And these shall be companions of thy play;
Both fleck'd with white, the true Arcadian strain,
Which Thestylis has often begg'd in vain:
And she shall have them, if again she sues,
Since you the giver and the gift refuse.
Come to my longing arms, my lovely care!
And take the presents which the nymphs prepare.
White lilies in full canisters they bring,
With all the glories of the purple spring.
The daughters of the flood have search'd the mead
For violets pale, and cropp'd the poppy's head,
The short narcissus, and fair daffodil,
Pansies to please the sight, and cassia sweet to smell·
And set soft hyacinths with iron-blue,

To shade marsh marigolds of shining hue;
Some bound in order, others loosely strow'd,
To dress thy bow'r, and trim thy new abode.
Myself will search our planted grounds at home,
For downy peaches, and the glossy plum;
And thrash the chestnuts in the neighb'ring grove,
Such as my Amaryllis us'd to love.
The laurel and the myrtle sweets agree;
And both in nosegays shall be bound for thee.
Ah Corydon! ah poor unhappy swain!
Alexis will thy homely gifts disdain:
Nor, should'st thou offer all thy little store,
Will rich Iŏllas yield, but offer more.
What have I done, to name that wealthy swain?
So pow'rful are his presents, mine so mean!
The boar amidst my crystal streams I bring;
And southern winds to blast my flow'ry spring.
Ah cruel creature! whom dost thou despise?
The gods, to live in woods, have left the skies;
And godlike Paris, in th' Idaean grove,
To Priam's wealth preferr'd Oenonè's love.
In cities, which she built, let Pallas reign;
Tow'rs are for gods, but forests for the swain.
The greedy lioness the wolf pursues,
The wolf the kid, the wanton kid the browse;
Alexis, thou art chas'd by Corydon:
All follow sev'ral games, and each his own.
See, from afar, the fields no longer smoke;
The sweating steers, unharness'd from the yoke,
Bring, as in triumph, back the crooked plough;
The shadows lengthen, as the sun goes low;
Cool breezes now the raging heats remove:
Ah cruel heav'n! that made no cure for love!
I wish for balmy sleep, but wish in vain:
Love has no bounds in pleasure, or in pain.
What frenzy, shepherd, has thy soul possess'd?
Thy vineyard lies half prun'd, and half undress'd.

Quench, Corydon, thy long unanswer'd fire!
Mind what the common wants of life require:
On willow twigs employ thy weaving care;
And find an easier love, though not so fair.

Pollio

SICILIAN Muse, begin a loftier strain!
Though lowly shrubs, and trees that shade the plain,
Delight not all; Sicilian Muse, prepare
To make the vocal woods deserve a consul's care.
The last great age, foretold by sacred rimes,
Renews its finished course: Saturnian times
Roll round again; and mighty years, begun
From their first orb, in radiant circles run.
The base degen'rate iron-offspring ends;
A golden progeny from heav'n descends.
O chaste Lucina! speed the mother's pains;
And haste the glorious birth! thy own Apollo reigns!
The lovely boy, with his auspicious face,
Shall Pollio's consulship and triumph grace:
Majestic months set out with him to their appointed race.
The father banish'd virtue shall restore;
And crimes shall threat the guilty world no more.
The son shall lead the life of gods, and be
By gods and heroes seen, and gods and heroes see.
The jarring nations he in peace shall bind,
And with paternal virtues rule mankind.
Unbidden earth shall wreathing ivy bring,
And fragrant herbs (the promises of spring),
As her first off'rings to her infant king.
The goats with strutting dugs shall homeward speed,
And lowing herds secure from lions feed.
His cradle shall with rising flow'rs be crown'd:
The serpent's brood shall die: the sacred ground
Shall weeds and pois'nous plants refuse to bear;

Each common bush shall Syrian roses wear.
But, when heroic verse his youth shall raise,
And form it to hereditary praise,
Unlabour'd harvests shall the fields adorn,
And cluster'd grapes shall blush on ev'ry thorn;
The knotted oaks shall show'rs of honey weep;
And through the matted grass the liquid gold shall creep.
Yet, of old fraud some footsteps shall remain:
The merchant still shall plough the deep for gain;
Great cities shall with walls be compass'd round;
And sharpen'd shares shall vex the fruitful ground;
Another Tiphys shall new seas explore;
Another Argo land the chiefs upon th' Iberian shore;
Another Helen other wars create,
And great Achilles urge the Trojan fate.
But, when to ripen'd manhood he shall grow,
The greedy sailor shall the seas forego:
No keel shall cut the waves for foreign ware;
For ev'ry soil shall ev'ry product bear.
The lab'ring hind his oxen shall disjoin:
No plough shall hurt the glebe, no pruning-hook the vine;
Nor wool shall in dissembled colours shine;
But the luxurious father of the fold,
With native purple, or unborrow'd gold,
Beneath his pompous fleece shall proudly sweat:
And under Tyrian robes the lamb shall bleat.
The Fates, when they this happy web have spun,
Shall bless the sacred clue, and bid it smoothly run.
Mature in years, to ready honours move,
O of celestial seed! O foster-son of Jove!
See! lab'ring Nature calls thee to sustain
The nodding frame of heav'n, and earth, and main!
See, to their base restor'd, earth, seas, and air;
And joyful ages, from behind, in crowding ranks appear.
To sing thy praise, would Heav'n my breath prolong,
Infusing spirits worthy such a song,
Not Thracian Orpheus should transcend my lays,

Nor Linus, crown'd with never-fading bays,
Though each his heav'nly parent should inspire;
The Muse instruct the voice, and Phoebus tune the lyre.
Should Pan contend in verse, and thou my theme,
Arcadian judges should their god condemn.
Begin, auspicious boy! to cast about
Thy infant eyes, and, with a smile, thy mother single out
Thy mother well deserves that short delight,
The nauseous qualms of ten long months and travail to requite.
Then smile! the frowning infant's doom is read:
No god shall crown the board, nor goddess bless the bed.

Silenus

I FIRST transferr'd to Rome Sicilian strains;
Nor blush'd the Doric Muse to dwell on Mantuan plains.
But when I try'd her tender voice, too young,
And fighting kings and bloody battles sung,
Apollo check'd my pride, and bade me feed
My fatt'ning flocks, nor dare beyond the reed.
Admonish'd thus, while ev'ry pen prepares
To write thy praises, Varus, and thy wars,
My past'ral Muse her humble tribute brings;
And yet not wholly uninspir'd she sings:
For all who read, and, reading, not disdain
These rural poems, and their lowly strain,
The name of Varus oft inscrib'd shall see
In ev'ry grove, and ev'ry vocal tree:
And all the silvan reign shall sing of thee:
Thy name, to Phoebus and the Muses known,
Shall in the front of ev'ry page be shown;
For he who sings thy praise, secures his own.
Proceed, my Muse!—Two Satyrs, on the ground,
Stretch'd at his ease, their sire Silenus found.
Doz'd with his fumes, and heavy with his load,

They found him snoring in his dark abode,
And seiz'd with youthful arms the drunken god.
His rosy wreath was dropp'd not long before,
Borne by the tide of wine, and floating on the floor.
His empty can, with ears half worn away,
Was hung on high, to boast the triumph of the day.
Invaded thus, for want of better bands,
His garland they unstring, and bind his hands:
For, by the fraudful god deluded long,
They now resolve to have their promis'd song.
Aegle came in, to make their party good—
The fairest Naïs of the neighb'ring flood—
And, while he stares around with stupid eyes,
His brows with berries, and his temples, dyes
He finds the fraud, and, with a smile, demands
On what design the boys had bound his hands.
"Loose me," he cry'd; " 'twas impudence to find
A sleeping god; 'tis sacrilege to bind.
To you the promis'd poem I will pay;
The nymph shall be rewarded in her way."
He rais'd his voice; and soon a num'rous throng
Of tripping Satyrs crowded to the song;
And silvan Fauns, and savage beasts, advanc'd;
And nodding forests to the numbers danc'd.
Not by Haemonian hills the Thracian bard,
Nor awful Phoebus was on Pindus heard,
With deeper silence, or with more regard.
He sung the secret seeds of Nature's frame;
How seas, and earth, and air, and active flame,
Fell through the mighty void, and, in their fall,
Were blindly gather'd in this goodly ball.
The tender soil then, stiff'ning by degrees,
Shut from the bounded earth the bounding seas.
Then earth and ocean various forms disclose;
And a new sun to the new world arose;
And mists, condens'd to clouds, obscure the sky;
And clouds, dissolv'd, the thirsty ground supply.

The rising trees the lofty mountains grace:
The lofty mountains feed the savage race,
Yet few, and strangers, in th' unpeopled place.
From thence the birth of man the song pursu'd,
And how the world was lost, and how renew'd:
The reign of Saturn, and the golden age;
Prometheus' theft, and Jove's avenging rage;
The cries of Argonauts for Hylas drown'd,
With whose repeated name the shores resound,
Then mourns the madness of the Cretan queen:
Happy for her, if herds had never been!
What fury, wretched woman, seiz'd thy breast?
The maids of Argos (though, with rage possess'd,
Their imitated lowings fill'd the grove)
Yet shunn'd the guilt of thy prepost'rous love,
Nor sought the youthful husband of the herd
Though lab'ring yokes on their own necks they fear'd,
And felt for budding horns on their smooth foreheads rear'd.
Ah, wretched queen! you range the pathless wood,
While on a flow'ry bank he chews the cud,
Or sleeps in shades, or through the forest roves,
And roars with anguish for his absent loves.
"Ye nymphs, with toils his forest-walk surround,
And trace his wand'ring footsteps on the ground.
But, ah! perhaps my passion he disdains,
And courts the milky mothers of the plains.
We search th' ungrateful fugitive abroad,
While they at home sustain his happy load."
He sung the lover's fraud—the longing maid,
With golden fruit, like all the sex, betray'd;
The sisters mourning for their brother's loss;
Their bodies hid in barks, and furr'd with moss;
How each a rising alder now appears,
And o'er the Po distils her gummy tears:
Then sung, how Gallus, by a Muse's hand,
Was led and welcom'd to the sacred strand;
The senate rising to salute their guest;

And Linus thus their gratitude express'd:
"Receive this present, by the Muses made,
The pipe on which th' Ascraean pastor play'd;
With which of old he charm'd the savage train,
And call'd the mountain-ashes to the plain.
Sing thou, on this, thy Phoebus, and the wood
Where once his fane of Parian marble stood:
On this his ancient oracles rehearse;
And with new numbers grace the god of verse."
Why should I sing the double Scylla's fate?
The first by love transform'd, the last by hate—
A beauteous maid above; but magic arts
With barking dogs deform'd her nether parts:
What vengeance on the passing fleet she pour'd,
The master frighted, and the mates devour'd.
Then ravish'd Philomel the song express'd;
The crime reveal'd; the sisters' cruel feast;
And how in fields the lapwing Tereus reigns,
The warbling nightingale in woods complains;
While Procnè makes on chimney-tops her moan,
And hovers o'er the palace once her own.
Whatever songs besides the Delphian god
Had taught the laurels, and the Spartan flood,
Silenus sung, the vales his voice rebound,
And carry to the skies the sacred sound.
And now the setting sun had warn'd the swain
To call his counted cattle from the plain:
Yet still th' unweary'd sire pursues the tuneful strain,
Till, unperceiv'd, the heav'ns with stars were hung,
And sudden night surpris'd the yet unfinish'd song.

The Enchantress

THE MOURNFUL muse of two despairing swains,
The love rejected, and the lovers' pains;
To which the savage lynxes list'ning stood;

The rivers stood on heaps, and stopp'd the running flood;
The hungry herd their needful food refuse—
Of two despairing swains, I sing the mournful muse.
 Great Pollio! thou, for whom thy Rome prepares
The ready triumph of thy finish'd wars,
Whether Timavus or th' Illyrian coast,
Whatever land or sea, thy presence boast;
Is there an hour in fate reserv'd for me,
To sing thy deeds in numbers worthy thee?
In numbers like to thine, could I rehearse
Thy lofty tragic scenes, thy labour'd verse;
The world another Sophocles in thee,
Another Homer should behold in me.
Amidst thy laurels let this ivy twine:
Thine was my earliest muse; my latest shall be thine.
 Scarce from the world the shades of night withdrew;
Scarce were the flocks refresh'd with morning dew,
When Damon, stretch'd beneath an olive shade,
And wildly staring upwards, thus inveigh'd
Against the conscious gods, and curs'd the cruel maid:
"Star of the morning, why dost thou delay?
Come, Lucifer, drive on the lagging day,
While I my Nisa's perjur'd faith deplore—
Witness, ye pow'rs, by whom she falsely swore!
The gods, alas! are witnesses in vain:
Yet shall my dying breath to heav'n complain.
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
 "The pines of Maenalus, the vocal grove,
Are ever full of verse, and full of love:
They hear the hinds, they hear their god complain,
Who suffer'd not the reeds to rise in vain.
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
 "Mopsus triumphs; he weds the willing fair.
When such is Nisa's choice, what lover can despair?
Now griffons join with mares; another age
Shall see the hound and hind their thirst assuage,
Promiscuous at the spring. Prepare the lights,

O Mopsus! and perform the bridal rites.
Scatter thy nuts among the scrambling boys:
Thine is the night, and thine the nuptial joys.
For thee the sun declines—O happy swain!
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
"O Nisa! justly to thy choice condemn'd!
Whom hast thou taken? whom hast thou contemn'd?
For him, thou hast refus'd my browsing herd,
Scorn'd my thick eyebrows, and my shaggy beard.
Unhappy Damon sighs and sings in vain,
While Nisa thinks no god regards a lover's pain.
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
"I view'd thee first, (how fatal was the view!)
And led thee where the ruddy wildings grew,
High on the planted hedge, and wet with morning dew.
Then scarce the bending branches I could win:
The callow down began to clothe my chin.
I saw; I perish'd; yet indulg'd my pain.
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
"I know thee, Love! in deserts thou wert bred,
And at the dugs of savage tigers fed;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains!
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strains.
"Relentless Love the cruel mother led
The blood of her unhappy babes to shed:
Love lent the sword; the mother struck the blow:
Inhuman she; but more inhuman thou;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains!
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strains.
"Old doting Nature, change thy course anew;
And let the trembling lamb the wolf pursue:
Let oaks now glitter with Hesperian fruit,
And purple daffodils from alders shoot:
Fat amber let the tamarisk distil,
And hooting owls contend with swans in skill;
Hoarse Tityrus strive with Orpheus in the woods,
And challenge fam'd Arion on the floods.

Or, oh! let Nature cease, and Chaos reign!
Begin with me, my flute, the sweet Maenalian strain.
"Let earth be sea; and let the whelming tide
The lifeless limbs of luckless Damon hide!
Farewell, ye secret woods, and shady groves,
Haunts of my youth, and conscious of my loves!
From yon high cliff I plunge into the main:
Take the last present of thy dying swain:
And cease, my silent flute, the sweet Maenalian strain."

Now take your turns, ye Muses, to rehearse
His friend's complaints, and mighty magic verse.

"Bring running water: bind those altars round
With fillets; and with vervain strow the ground.
Make fat with frankincense the sacred fires,
To re-inflame my Daphnis with desires.
'Tis done: we want but verse.—Restore, my charms,
My ling'ring Daphnis to my longing arms.
"Pale Phoebe, drawn by verse, from heav'n descends.
And Circe chang'd with charms Ulysses' friends.
Verse breaks the ground, and penetrates the brake,
And in the winding cavern splits the snake.
Verse fires the frozen veins.—Restore, my charms,
My ling'ring Daphnis to my longing arms.
"Around his waxen image first I wind
Three woollen fillets, of three colours join'd;
Thrice bind about his thrice-devoted head,
Which round the sacred altar thrice is led.
Unequal numbers please the gods.—My charms,
Restore my Daphnis to my longing arms.
"Knit with three knots the fillets: knit them strait;
Then say, 'These knots to love I consecrate.'
Haste, Amaryllis, haste!—Restore, my charms,
My lovely Daphnis to my longing arms.
"As fire this figure hardens, made of clay,
And this of wax with fire consumes away;

Such let the soul of cruel Daphnis be—
Hard to the rest of women, soft to me.
Crumble the sacred mole of salt and corn:
Next in the fire the bays with brimstone burn;
And, while it crackles in the sulphur, say,
'This I for Daphnis burn; thus Daphnis burn away!
This laurel is his fate.'—Restore, my charms,
My lovely Daphnis to my longing arms.

"As when the raging heifer, through the grove,
Stung with desire, pursues her wand'ring love;
Faint at the last, she seeks the weedy pools,
To quench her thirst, and on the rushes rolls,
Careless of night, unmindful to return;
Such fruitless fires perfidious Daphnis burn,
While I so scorn his love!—Restore, my charms,
My ling'ring Daphnis to my longing arms.

"These garments once were his, and left to me,
The pledges of his promis'd loyalty,
Which underneath my threshold I bestow.
These pawns, O sacred earth! to me my Daphnis owe.
As these were his, so mine is he.—My charms,
Restore their ling'ring lord to my deluded arms.

"These pois'nous plants, for magic use design'd,
(The noblest and the best of all the baneful kind)
Old Moeris brought me from the Pontic strand,
And cull'd the mischief of a bounteous land.
Smear'd with these pow'rful juices, on the plain,
He howls a wolf among the hungry train;
And oft the mighty necromancer boasts,
With these, to call from tombs the stalking ghosts,
And from the roots to tear the standing corn,
Which, whirl'd aloft, to distant fields is borne:
Such is the strength of spells.—Restore, my charms,
My ling'ring Daphnis to my longing arms.

"Bear out these ashes; cast them in the brook;
Cast backwards o'er your head; nor turn your look.
Since neither gods nor godlike verse can move,

Break out, ye smother'd fires, and kindle smother'd love.
Exert your utmost pow'r, my ling'ring charms;
And force my Daphnis to my longing arms.
"See, while my last endeavours I delay,
The waking ashes rise, and round our altars play!
Run to the threshold, Amaryllis! hark!
Our Hylax opens, and begins to bark
Good heav'n! may lovers what they wish believe?
Or dream their wishes, and those dreams deceive?
No more! my Daphnis comes! no more, my charms!
He comes, he runs, he leaps, to my desiring arms."

Gallus

THY SACRED succour, Arethusa, bring,
To crown my labour ('tis the last I sing),
Which proud Lycoris may with pity view:
The Muse is mournful, though the numbers few.
Refuse me not a verse, to grief and Gallus due:
So may thy silver streams, beneath the tide,
Unmix'd with briny seas, securely glide.
Sing then my Gallus, and his hopeless vows;
Sing, while my cattle crop the tender browse.
The vocal grove shall answer to the sound,
And Echo, from the vales, the tuneful voice rebound.
What lawns or woods withheld you from his aid,
Ye nymphs, when Gallus was to love betray'd,
To love, unpity'd by the cruel maid?
Not steepy Pindus could retard your course,
Nor cleft Parnassus, nor th' Aonian source:
Nothing that owns the Muses, could suspend
Your aid to Gallus:—Gallus is their friend.
For him the lofty laurel stands in tears,
And hung with humid pearls the lowly shrub appears.
Maenalian pines the godlike swain bemoan,
When, spread beneath a rock, he sigh'd alone;

And cold Lycaeus wept from ev'ry dropping stone.
The sheep surround their shepherd, as he lies:
Blush not, sweet poet, nor the name despise:
Along the streams, his flock Adonis fed;
And yet the queen of beauty bless'd his bed.
The swains and tardy neat-herds came, and last
Menalcas, wet with beating winter mast.
Wond'ring, they ask'd from whence arose thy flame.
Yet more amaz'd, thy own Apollo came.
Flush'd were his cheeks, and glowing were his eyes:
"Is she thy care? is she thy care?" he cries.
"Thy false Lycoris flies thy love and thee,
And, for thy rival, tempts the raging sea,
The forms of horrid war, and heav'n's inclemency!"
Silvanus came: his brows a country crown
Of fennel, and of nodding lilies, drown.
Great Pan arriv'd; and we beheld him too,
His cheeks and temples of vermilion hue.
"Why, Gallus, this immod'rate grief?" he cry'd:
"Think'st thou that love with tears is satisfy'd?
The meads are sooner drunk with morning dews,
The bees with flow'ry shrubs, the goats with browse."
Unmov'd, and with dejected eyes, he mourn'd.
He paus'd, and then these broken words return'd:
" 'Tis past; and pity gives me no relief:
But you, Arcadian swains, shall sing my grief,
And on your hills my last complaints renew:
So sad a song is only worthy you.
How light would lie the turf upon my breast,
If you my suff'rings in your songs express'd!
Ah! that your birth and bus'ness had been mine—
To pen the sheep, and press the swelling vine!
Had Phyllis or Amyntas caus'd my pain,
Or any nymph or shepherd on the plain,
(Though Phyllis brown, though black Amyntas were,
Are violets not sweet, because not fair?)
Beneath the sallows and the shady vine,

My loves had mix'd their pliant limbs with mine:
Phyllis with myrtle wreaths had crown'd my hair,
And soft Amyntas sung away my care.
Come, see what pleasures in our plains abound;
The woods, the fountains, and the flow'ry ground.
As you are beauteous, were you half so true,
Here could I live, and love, and die with only you.
Now I to fighting-fields am sent afar,
And strive in winter camps with toils of war;
While you, (alas, that I should find it so!)
To shun my sight, your native soil forego,
And climb the frozen Alps, and tread th' eternal snow.
Ye frosts and snows, her tender body spare!
Those are not limbs for icicles to tear.
For me, the wilds and deserts are my choice;
The Muses, once my care; my once harmonious voice.
There will I sing, forsaken and alone:
The rocks and hollow caves shall echo to my moan.
The rind of ev'ry plant her name shall know;
And, as the rind extends, the love shall grow.
Then on Arcadian mountains will I chase
(Mix'd with the woodland nymphs) the savage race;
Nor cold shall hinder me, with horns and hounds
To thrid the thickets, or to leap the mounds.
And now methinks o'er steepy rocks I go,
And rush through sounding woods, and bend the Parthian bow;
As if with sports my suff'rings I could ease,
Or by my pains the god of love appease.
My frenzy changes: I delight no more
On mountain-tops to chase the tusky boar:
No game but hopeless love my thoughts pursue:
Once more, ye nymphs, and songs, and sounding woods, adieu!
Love alters not for us his hard decrees,
Not though beneath the Thracian clime we freeze,
Or Italy's indulgent heav'n forego,

And in mid-winter tread Sithonian snow;
Or, when the barks of elms are scorched, we keep
On Merŏë's burning plains the Libyan sheep.
In hell, and earth, and seas, and heav'n above,
Love conquers all; and we must yield to Love."
My Muses, here your sacred raptures end:
The verse was what I ow'd my suff'ring friend.
This while I sung, my sorrows I deceiv'd,
And bending osiers into baskets weav'd.
The song, because inspir'd by you, shall shine;
And Gallus will approve, because 'tis mine—
Gallus, for whom my holy flames renew,
Each hour, and ev'ry moment rise in view;
As alders, in the spring, their boles extend,
And heave so fiercely, that the bark they rend.
Now let us rise: for hoarseness oft invades
The singer's voice, who sings beneath the shades.
From juniper unwholesome dews distil,
That blast the sooty corn, the with'ring herbage kill.
Away, my goats, away! for you have brows'd your fill.

What Makes a Plenteous Harvest

WHAT makes a plenteous harvest, when to turn
The fruitful soil, and when to sow the corn;
The care of sheep, of oxen, and of kine;
And how to raise on elms the teeming vine;
The birth and genius of the frugal bee,
I sing, Maecenas, and I sing to thee.
Ye deities! who fields and plains protect,
Who rule the seasons, and the year direct,
Bacchus and fost'ring Cerès, pow'rs divine,
Who gave us corn for mast, for water wine—
Ye Fauns, propitious to the rural swains,
Ye Nymphs that haunt the mountains and the plains,
Join in my work, and to my numbers bring

Your needful succour; for your gifts I sing.
And thou, whose trident struck the teeming earth,
And made a passage for the courser's birth,
And thou, for whom the Caean shore sustains
The milky herds, that graze the flow'ry plains;
And thou, the shepherds' tutelary god,
Leave, for a while, O Pan! thy lov'd abode,
And, if Arcadian fleeces be thy care,
From fields and mountains to my song repair.
Inventor, Pallas, of the fatt'ning oil,
Thou founder of the plough and ploughman's toil;
And thou, whose hands the shroud-like cypress rear;
Come, all ye gods and goddesses, that wear
The rural honours, and increase the year,
You, who supply the ground with seeds of grain;
And you, who swell those seeds with kindly rain,
And chiefly thou, whose undetermin'd state
Is yet the bus'ness of the gods' debate,
Whether in after-times to be declar'd
The patron of the world, and Rome's peculiar guard,
Or o'er the fruits and seasons to preside,
And the round circuit of the year to guide--
Pow'rful of blessings, which thou strew'st around,
And with thy goddess mother's myrtle crown'd.
Or wilt thou, Caesar, choose the wat'ry reign,
To smooth the surges, and correct the main?
Then mariners, in storms, to thee shall pray;
Ev'n utmost Thule shall thy pow'r obey;
And Neptune shall resign the fasces of the sea:
The wat'ry virgins for thy bed shall strive,
And Tethys all her waves in dowry give.
Or wilt thou bless our summers with thy rays,
And, seated near the Balance, poise the days,
Where, in the void of heav'n a space is free,
Betwixt the Scorpion and the Maid, for thee?
The Scorpion, ready to receive thy laws,
Yields half his region, and contracts his claws.

Whatever part of heav'n thou shalt obtain,
(For let not hell presume of such a reign;
Nor let so dire a thirst of empire move
Thy mind, to leave thy kindred gods above;
Though Greece admires Elysium's blest retreat,
Though Proserpine affects her silent seat,
And, importun'd by Ceres to remove,
Prefers the fields below to those above)
Be thou propitious, Caesar! guide my course,
And to my bold endeavours add thy force:
Pity the poet's and the ploughman's cares,
Int'rest thy greatness in our mean affairs,
And use thyself betimes to hear and grant our pray'rs.
While yet the spring is young, while earth unbinds
Her frozen bosom to the western winds;
While mountain snows dissolve against the sun,
And streams, yet new, from precipices run;
Ev'n in this early dawning of the year,
Produce the plough, and yoke the sturdy steer,
And goad him till he groans beneath his toil,
Till the bright share is bury'd in the soil.
That crop rewards the greedy peasant's pains,
Which twice the sun, and twice the cold sustains,
And bursts the crowded barns with more than promis'd gains.
But, ere we stir the yet unbroken ground,
The various course of seasons must be found;
The weather, and the setting of the winds;
The culture suiting to the sev'ral kinds
Of seeds and plants; and what will thrive and rise,
And what the genius of the soil denies.
This ground with Bacchus, that with Ceres, suits:
That other loads the trees with happy fruits:
A fourth, with grass unbidden, decks the ground.
Thus Tmolus is with yellow saffron crown'd:
India black ebon and white iv'ry bears;
And soft Idume weeps her od'rous tears.

Thus Pontus sends her beaver-stones from far;
And naked Spaniards temper steel for war:
Epirus, for th' Elean chariot, breeds
(In hopes of palms) a race of running steeds.
This is th' orig'nal contract; these the laws
Impos'd by Nature, and by Nature's cause,
On sundry places, when Deucalion hurl'd
His mother's entrails on the desert world;
Whence men, a hard laborious kind, were born.
Then borrow part of winter for thy corn;
And early, with thy team, the glebe in furrows turn;
That, while the turf lies open and unbound,
Succeeding suns may bake the mellow ground.
But, if the soil be barren, only scar
The surface, and but lightly print the share,
When cold Arcturus rises with the sun;
Lest wicked weeds the corn should over-run
In wat'ry soils; or lest the barren sand
Should suck the moisture from the thirsty land.
Both these unhappy soils the swain forbears,
And keeps a sabbath of alternate years,
That the spent earth may gather heart again,
And, better'd by cessation, bear the grain:
At least, where vetches, pulse, and tares, have stood,
And stalks of lupines grew (a stubborn wood),
Th' ensuing season, in return, may bear
The bearded product of the golden year:
For flax and oats will burn the tender field,
And sleepy poppies harmful harvests yield.
But sweet vicissitudes of rest and toil
Make easy labour, and renew the soil.
Yet sprinkle sordid ashes all around,
And load with fatt'ning dung thy fallow ground.
Thus change of seeds for meagre soils is best;
And earth manur'd, not idle, though at rest.
Long practice has a sure improvement found,
With kindled fires to burn the barren ground,

When the light stubble, to the flames resign'd,
Is driv'n along, and crackles in the wind:
Whether from hence the hollow womb of earth
Is warm'd with secret strength for better birth;
Or, when the latent vice is cur'd by fire,
Redundant humours through the pores expire;
Or that the warmth distends the chinks, and makes
New breathings, whence new nourishment she takes;
Or that the heat the gaping ground constrains,
New knits the surface, and new strings the veins;
Lest soaking show'rs should pierce her secret seat,
Or freezing Boreas chill her genial heat,
Or scorching suns too violently beat.

Nor is the profit small, the peasant makes,
Who smooths with harrows, or who pounds with rakes,
The crumbling clods: nor Ceres, from on high,
Regards his labours with a grudging eye;
Nor his, who ploughs across the furrow'd grounds,
And on the back of earth inflicts new wounds;
For he, with frequent exercise, commands
Th' unwilling soil, and tames the stubborn lands.

Ye swains, invoke the pow'rs who rule the sky,
For a moist summer, and a winter dry;
For winter drought rewards the peasant's pain,
And broods indulgent on the bury'd grain.
Hence Mysia boasts her harvests, and the tops
Of Gargarus admire their happy crops.

When first the soil receives the fruitful seed,
Make no delay, but cover it with speed:
So fenc'd from cold; the pliant furrows break,
Before the surly clod resists the rake;
And call the floods from high, to rush amain,
With pregnant streams to swell the teeming grain.
Then, when the fiery suns too fiercely play,
And shrivell'd herbs on with'ring stems decay,
The wary ploughman, on the mountain's brow,
Undams his wat'ry stores—(huge torrents flow,

And, rattling down the rocks, large moisture yield,
Temp'ring the thirsty fever of the field);
And, lest the stem, too feeble for the freight,
Should scarce sustain the head's unwieldy weight,
Sends in his feeding flocks betimes, t' invade
The rising bulk of the luxuriant blade,
'Ere yet th' aspiring offspring of the grain
O'ertops the ridges of the furrow'd plain;
And drains the standing waters, when they yield
Too large a bev'rage to the drunken field:
But most in autumn, and the show'ry spring,
When dubious months uncertain weather bring;
When fountains open; when impetuous rain
Swells hasty brooks, and pours upon the plain;
When earth with slime and mud is cover'd o'er,
Or hollow places spew their wat'ry store.

Nor yet the ploughman, nor the lab'ring steer,
Sustain alone the hazards of the year:
But glutton geese, and the Strymonian crane,
With foreign troops invade the tender grain;
And tow'ring weeds malignant shadows yield:
And spreading succ'ry chokes the rising field.
The sire of gods and men, with hard decrees,
Forbids our plenty to be bought with ease,
And wills that mortal men, inur'd to toil,
Should exercise, with pains, the grudging soil.
Himself invented first the shining share,
And whetted human industry by care;
Himself did handicrafts and arts ordain,
Nor suffer'd sloth to rust his active reign.
Ere this, no peasant vex'd the peaceful ground,
Which only turfs and greens for altars found:
No fences parted fields; nor marks nor bounds
Distinguish'd acres of litigious grounds:
But all was common; and the fruitful earth
Was free to give her unexacted birth.
Jove added venom to the viper's brood,

And swell'd, with raging storms, the peaceful flood;
Commission'd hungry wolves t' infest the fold,
And shook from oaken leaves the liquid gold;
Remov'd from human reach the cheerful fire,
And from the rivers bade the wine retire;
That studious need might useful arts explore;
From furrow'd fields to reap the foodful store,
And force the veins of clashing flints t' expire
The lurking seeds of their celestial fire.
Then first on seas the hollow'd alder swam:
Then sailors quarter'd heav'n, and found a name
For ev'ry fix'd and ev'ry wand'ring star—
The Pleiads, Hyads, and the Northern Car.
Then toils for beasts, and lime for birds, were found,
And deep-mouth'd dogs did forest-walks surround;
And casting-nets were spread in shallow brooks,
Drags in the deep; and baits were hung on hooks.
Then saws were tooth'd, and sounding axes made;
(For wedges first did yielding wood invade)
And various arts in order did succeed.—
What cannot endless labour, urg'd by need?
First Ceres taught, the ground with grain to sow,
And arm'd with iron shares the crooked plough;
When now Dodonian oaks no more supply'd
Their mast, and trees their forest-fruit deny'd.
Soon was his labour doubled to the swain,
And blasting mildews blacken'd all his grain:
Tough thistles chok'd the fields, and kill'd the corn,
And an unthrifty crop of weeds was born:
Then burs and brambles, an unbidden crew
Of graceless guests, th' unhappy field subdue;
And oats unblest, and darnel domineers,
And shoots its head above the shining ears;
So that, unless the land with daily care
Is exercis'd, and, with an iron war
Of rakes and harrows, the proud foes expell'd,
And birds with clamours frighted from the field;

Unless the boughs are lopp'd that shade the plain,
And heav'n invok'd with vows for fruitful rain;
On others' crops you may with envy look,
And shake, for food, the long-abandon'd oak.
Nor must we pass untold, what arms they wield,
Who labour tillage and the furrow'd field;
Without whose aid, the ground her corn denies,
And nothing can be sown, and nothing rise.
The crooked plough, the share, the tow'ring height
Of waggons, and the cart's unwieldy weight,
The sled, the tumbril, hurdles, and the flail,
The fan of Bacchus, with the flying sail—
These all must be prepar'd, if ploughmen hope
The promis'd blessing of a bounteous crop.
Young elms, with early force, in copses bow,
Fit for the figure of the crooked plough.
Of eight foot long a fasten'd beam prepare:
On either side the head, produce an ear;
And sink a socket for the shining share.
Of beech the plough-tail, and the bending yoke,
Or softer linden harden'd in the smoke.
I could be long in precepts, but I fear,
So mean a subject might offend your ear.
Delve of convenient depth your thrashing floor:
With temper'd clay then fill and face it o'er;
And let the weighty roller run the round,
To smooth the surface of th' unequal ground;
Lest, crack'd with summer heats, the flooring flies,
Or sinks, and through the crannies weeds arise:
For sundry foes the rural realm surround:
The field-mouse builds her garner under ground
For gather'd grain: the blind laborious mole
In winding mazes works her hidden hole:
In hollow caverns vermin make abode—
The hissing serpent, and the swelling toad:
The corn-devouring weasel here abides,
And the wise ant her wintry store provides.

Mark well the flow'ring almonds in the wood:
If od'rous blooms the bearing branches load,
The glebe will answer to the silvan reign;
Great heats will follow, and large crops of grain.
But, if a wood of leaves o'ershade the tree,
Such and so barren will thy harvest be:
In vain the hind shall vex the thrashing-floor;
For empty chaff and straw will be thy store.
Some steep their seed, and some in caldrons boil,
With vig'rous nitre and with lees of oil,
O'er gentle fires, th' exub'rant juice to drain,
And swell the flatt'ring husks with fruitful grain.
Yet is not the success for years assur'd,
Though chosen is the seed, and fully cur'd,
Unless the peasant, with his annual pain,
Renews his choice, and culls the largest grain.
Thus all below, whether by Nature's curse,
Or Fate's decree, degen'rate still to worse.
So the boat's brawny crew the current stem,
And, slow advancing, struggle with the stream:
But, if they slack their hands, or cease to strive,
Then down the flood with headlong haste they drive.
Nor must the ploughman less observe the skies,
When the Kids, Dragon, and Arcturus rise,
Than sailors homeward bent, who cut their way
Through Helle's stormy straits, and oyster-breeding sea.
But, when Astraea's Balance, hung on high,
Betwixt the nights and days divides the sky,
Then yoke your oxen, sow your winter grain,
Till cold December comes with driving rain.
Linseed and fruitful poppy bury warm,
In a dry season, and prevent the storm.
Sow beans and clover in a rotten soil,
And millet rising from your annual toil,
When, with his golden horns, in full career,
The Bull beats down the barriers of the year,
And Argo and the Dog forsake the northern sphere.

But, if your care to wheat alone extend,
Let Maia with her sisters first descend,
And the bright Gnossian diadem downward bend,
Before you trust in earth your future hope;
Or else expect a listless lazy crop.
Some swains have sown before; but most have found
A husky harvest from the grudging ground.
Vile vetches would you sow, or lentils lean,
The growth of Egypt, or the kidney-bean?
Begin when the slow Waggoner descends;
Nor cease your sowing till mid-winter ends.
For this, through twelve bright signs Apollo guides
The year, and earth in sev'ral climes divides.
Five girdles bind the skies: the torrid zone
Glows with the passing and repassing sun:
Far on the right and left, th' extremes of heav'n
To frosts and snows and bitter blasts are giv'n:
Betwixt the midst and these, the gods assign'd
Two habitable seats for human kind,
And, 'cross their limits, cut a sloping way,
Which the twelve signs in beauteous order sway.
Two poles turn round the globe; one seen to rise
O'er Scythian hills, and one in Libyan skies:
The first sublime in heav'n, the last is whirl'd
Below the regions of the nether world.
Around our pole the spiry Dragon glides,
And, like a winding stream, the Bears divides—
The less and greater, who, by Fate's decree,
Abhor to dive beneath the northern sea.
There, as they say, perpetual night is found
In silence brooding on th' unhappy ground:
Or, when Aurora leaves our northern sphere,
She lights the downward heav'n, and rises there;
And, when on us she breathes the living light,
Red Vesper kindles there the tapers of the night.
From hence uncertain seasons we may know;
And when to reap the grain, and when to sow;

Or when to fell the furzes: when 'tis meet
To spread the flying canvas for the fleet.
Observe what stars arise or disappear;
And the four quarters of the rolling year.
But, when cold weather and continu'd rain
The lab'ring husband in his house restrain,
Let him forecast his work with timely care,
Which else is huddled, when the skies are fair.
Then let him mark the sheep, or whet the shining share,
Or hollow trees for boats, or number o'er
His sacks, or measure his increasing store,
Or sharpen stakes, or head the forks, or twine
The sallow twigs to tie the straggling vine;
Or wicker baskets weave, or air the corn,
Or grinded grain betwixt two marbles turn.
No laws, divine or human, can restrain
From necessary works the lab'ring swain.
Ev'n holy-days and feasts permission yield
To float the meadows, or to fence the field;
To fire the brambles, snare the birds, and steep
In wholesome water-falls the woolly sheep.
And oft the drudging ass is driv'n, with toil,
To neighb'ring towns, with apples and with oil;
Returning, late and loaden, home with gain
Of barter'd pitch, and hand-mills for the grain.
 The lucky days, in each revolving moon,
For labour choose: the fifth be sure to shun;
That gave the Furies and pale Pluto birth,
And arm'd, against the skies, the sons of earth.
With mountains pil'd on mountains, thrice they strove
To scale the steepy battlements of Jove;
And thrice his lightning and red thunder play'd,
And their demolish'd works in ruin laid.
The sev'nth is, next the tenth, the best to join
Young oxen to the yoke, and plant the vine.
Then, weavers, stretch your stays upon the weft.
The ninth is good for travel, bad for theft.

Some works in dead of night are better done,
Or when the morning dew prevents the sun.
Parch'd meads and stubble mow by Phoebe's light,
Which both require the coolness of the night;
For moisture then abounds, and pearly rains
Descend in silence, to refresh the plains.
The wife and husband equally conspire
To work by night, and rake the winter fire:
He sharpens torches in the glimm'ring room;
She shoots the flying shuttle through the loom,
Or boils in kettles must of wine, and skims,
With leaves, the dregs that overflow the brims:
And, till the watchful cock awakes the day,
She sings, to drive the tedious hours away.
But, in warm weather, when the skies are clear,
By day-light reap the product of the year;
And in the sun your golden grain display,
And thrash it out, and winnow it by day.
Plough naked, swain, and naked sow the land;
For lazy winter numbs the lab'ring hand.
In genial winter, swains enjoy their store,
Forget their hardships, and recruit for more
The farmer to full bowls invites his friends,
And, what he got with pains, with pleasure spends.
So sailors, when escap'd from stormy seas,
First crown their vessels, then indulge their ease.
Yet that's the proper time to thrash the wood
For mast of oak, your fathers' homely food;
To gather laurel-berries, and the spoil
Of bloody myrtles, and to press your oil;
For stalking cranes to set the guileful snare;
T' inclose the stags in toils, and hunt the hare;
With Balearic slings, or Gnossian bow,
To persecute from far the flying doe,
Then, when the fleecy skies new clothe the wood,
And cakes of rustling ice come rolling down the flood.
Now sing we stormy stars, when autumn weighs

The year, and adds to nights, and shortens days,
And suns declining shine with feeble rays:
What cares must then attend the toiling swain;
Or when the low'ring spring, with lavish rain,
Beats down the slender stem and bearded grain,
While yet the head is green, or, lightly swell'd
With milky moisture, over-looks the field.
Ev'n when the farmer, now secure of fear,
Sends in the swains to spoil the finish'd year;
Ev'n while the reaper fills his greedy hands,
And binds the golden sheaves in brittle bands;
Oft have I seen a sudden storm arise,
From all the warring winds that sweep the skies:
The heavy harvest from the root is torn,
And whirl'd aloft the lighter stubble borne:
With such a force the flying rack is driv'n,
And such a winter wears the face of heav'n.
And oft whole sheets descend of sluicy rain,
Suck'd by the spongy clouds from off the main:
The lofty skies, at once come pouring down,
The promis'd crop and golden labours drown.
The dikes are fill'd; and, with a roaring sound,
The rising rivers float the nether ground;
And rocks the bellowing voice of boiling seas rebound.
The Father of the gods his glory shrouds,
Involv'd in tempests, and a night of clouds,
And, from the middle darkness flashing out,
By fits he deals his fiery bolts about.
Earth feels the motions of her angry god;
Her entrails tremble, and her mountains nod;
And flying beasts in forests seek abode.
Deep horror seizes ev'ry human breast;
Their pride is humbled, and their fear confess'd,
While he from high his rolling thunder throws,
And fires the mountains with repeated blows.
The rocks are from their old foundations rent;
The winds redouble, and the rains augment:

The waves on heaps are dash'd against the shore;
And now the woods, and now the billows roar.
In fear of this, observe the starry signs,
Where Saturn houses, and where Hermes joins.
But first to heav'n thy due devotions pay,
And annual gifts on Ceres' altars lay.
When winter's rage abates, when cheerful hours
Awake the spring, and spring awakes the flow'rs,
On the green turf thy careless limbs display,
And celebrate the Mighty Mother's day:
For then the hills with pleasing shades are crown'd,
And sleeps are sweeter on the silken ground:
With milder beams the sun serenely shines:
Fat are the lambs, and luscious are the wines.
Let ev'ry swain adore her pow'r divine,
And milk and honey mix with sparkling wine:
Let all the choir of clowns attend the show,
In long procession, shouting as they go;
Invoking her to bless their yearly stores,
Inviting plenty to their crowded floors.
Thus in the spring, and thus in summer's heat,
Before the sickles touch the rip'ning wheat,
On Ceres call, and let the lab'ring hind
With oaken wreaths his hollow temples bind:
On Ceres let him call, and Ceres praise,
With uncouth dances, and with country lays.
And that, by certain signs, we may presage
Of heats and rains, and winds' impetuous rage,
The sov'reign of the heav'ns has set on high
The moon, to mark the changes of the sky;
When southern blasts should cease, and when the swain
Should near their folds his feeding flocks restrain.
For, ere the rising winds begin to roar,
The working seas advance to wash the shore:
Soft whispers run along the leafy woods;
And mountains whistle to the murm'ring floods.
Ev'n then the doubtful billows scarce abstain

From the toss'd vessel on the troubled main;
When crying cormorants forsake the sea,
And, stretching to the covert, wing their way;
When sportful coots run skimming o'er the strand;
When watchful herons leave their wat'ry stand,
And, mounting upward with erected flight,
Gain on the skies, and soar above the sight.
And oft, before tempestuous winds arise,
The seeming stars fall headlong from the skies,
And, shooting through the darkness, gild the night
With sweeping glories, and long trails of light;
And chaff with eddy-winds is whirl'd around,
And dancing leaves are lifted from the ground;
And floating feathers on the waters play.
But, when the winged thunder takes his way
From the cold North, and East and West engage,
And at their frontiers meet with equal rage,
The clouds are crush'd: a glut of gather'd rain
The hollow ditches fills, and floats the plain;
And sailors furl their dropping sheets amain.
 Wet weather seldom hurts the most unwise;
So plain the signs, such prophets are the skies.
The wary crane foresees it first, and sails
Above the storm, and leaves the lowly vales:
The cow looks up, and from afar can find
The change of heav'n, and snuffs it in the wind:
The swallow skims the river's wat'ry face:
The frogs renew the croaks of their loquacious race:
The careful ant her secret cell forsakes,
And drags her eggs along the narrow tracks:
At either horn the rainbow drinks the flood:
Huge flocks of rising rooks forsake their food,
And, crying, seek the shelter of the wood.
Besides, the sev'ral sorts of wat'ry fowls,
That swim the seas, or haunt the standing pools,
The swans that sail along the silver flood,
And dive with stretching necks to search their food,

Then lave their backs with sprinkling dews in vain,
And stem the stream, to meet the promis'd rain.
The crow, with clam'rous cries, the show'r demands,
And single stalks along the desert sands.
The nightly virgin, while her wheel she plies,
Foresees the storm impending in the skies,
When sparkling lamps their sputt'ring light advance,
And in the sockets oily bubbles dance.
Then, after show'rs, 'tis easy to descry
Returning suns, and a serener sky:
The stars shine smarter; and the moon adorns,
As with unborrow'd beams, her sharpen'd horns.
The filmy gossamer now flits no more,
Nor halcyons bask on the short sunny shore:
Their litter is not toss'd by sows unclean,
But a blue droughty mist descends upon the plain;
And owls, that mark the setting sun, declare
A star-light ev'ning, and a morning fair.
Tow'ring aloft, avenging Nisus flies,
While, dar'd, below the guilty Scylla lies.
Wherever frighted Scylla flies away,
Swift Nisus follows, and pursues his prey:
Where injur'd Nisus takes his airy course,
Thence trembling Scylla flies, and shuns his force.
(This punishment pursues th' unhappy maid,
And thus the purple hair is dearly paid.)
Then, thrice the ravens rend the liquid air,
And croaking notes proclaim the settled fair.
Then round their airy palaces they fly,
To greet the sun; and, seiz'd with secret joy,
When storms are over-blown, with food repair
To their forsaken nests, and callow care.
Not that I think their breasts with heav'nly souls
Inspir'd, as man, who destiny controls:
But, with the changeful temper of the skies,
As rains condense, and sunshine rarefies,
So turn the species in their alter'd minds,

Compos'd by calms, and discompos'd by winds.
From hence proceeds the birds' harmonious voice;
From hence the cows exult, and frisking lambs rejoice.
 Observe the daily circle of the sun,
And the short year of each revolving moon:
By them thou shalt foresee the following day;
Nor shall a starry night thy hopes betray.
When first the moon appears, if then she shrouds
Her silver crescent tipp'd with sable clouds,
Conclude she bodes a tempest on the main,
And brews for fields impetuous floods of rain.
Or, if her face with fiery flushing glow,
Expect the rattling winds aloft to blow.
But, four nights old, (for that's the surest sign)
With sharpen'd horns if glorious then she shine,
Next day, nor only that, but all the moon,
'Till her revolving race be wholly run,
Are void of tempests, both by land and sea;
And sailors in the port their promis'd vows shall pay.
 Above the rest, the sun, who never lies,
Foretells the change of weather in the skies:
For, if he rise unwilling to his race,
Clouds on his brow, and spots upon his face;
Or if through mists he shoots his sullen beams,
Frugal of light, in loose and straggling streams;
Suspect a drizzling day, with southern rain,
Fatal to fruits, and flocks, and promis'd grain.
Or if Aurora, with half-open'd eyes,
And a pale sickly cheek, salute the skies;
How shall the vine, with tender leaves, defend
Her teeming clusters, when the storms descend,
When ridgy roofs and tiles can scarce avail
To bar the ruin of the rattling hail?
 But, more than all, the setting sun survey,
When down the steep of heav'n he drives the day:
For oft we find him finishing his race,
With various colours erring on his face.

If fiery red his glowing globe descends,
High winds and furious tempests he portends:
But, if his cheeks are swoln with livid blue,
He bodes wet weather by his wat'ry hue:
If dusky spots are vary'd on his brow,
And, streak'd with red, a troubled colour show;
That sullen mixture shall at once declare
Winds, rain, and storms, and elemental war.
What desp'rate madman then would venture o'er
The frith, or haul his cables from the shore?
But, if with purple rays he brings the light,
And a pure heav'n resigns to quiet night,
No rising winds, or falling storms, are nigh;
But northern breezes through the forest fly,
And drive the rack, and purge the ruffled sky.
Th' unerring sun by certain signs declares,
What the late ev'n or early morn prepares,
And when the South projects a stormy day,
And when the clearing North will puff the clouds away.
The sun reveals the secrets of the sky;
And who dares give the source of light the lie?
The change of empires often he declares,
Fierce tumults, hidden treasons, open wars.
He first the fate of Caesar did foretell,
And pity'd Rome, when Rome in Caesar fell;
In iron clouds conceal'd the public light;
And impious mortals fear'd eternal night.
Nor was the fact foretold by him alone:
Nature herself stood forth, and seconded the sun.
Earth, air, and seas, with prodigies were sign'd;
And birds obscene, and howling dogs, divin'd.
What rocks did Aetna's bellowing mouth expire
From her torn entrails! and what floods of fire!
What clanks were heard, in German skies afar,
Of arms, and armies rushing to the war!
Dire earthquakes rent the solid Alps below,
And from their summits shook th' eternal snow:

Pale spectres in the close of night were seen;
And voices heard, of more than mortal men,
In silent groves: dumb sheep and oxen spoke;
And streams ran backward, and their beds forsook:
The yawning earth disclos'd th' abyss of hell:
The weeping statues did the wars foretell;
And holy sweat from brazen idols fell.
Then, rising in his might, the king of floods
Rush'd through the forests, tore the lofty woods,
And, rolling onward, with a sweepy sway,
Bore houses, herds, and lab'ring hinds away.
Blood sprang from wells; wolves howl'd in towns by night;
And boding victims did the priests affright.
Such peals of thunder never pour'd from high,
Nor forky lightnings flash'd from such a sullen sky.
Red meteors ran across th' etherial space,
Stars disappear'd, and comets took their place
For this, th' Emathian plains once more were strow'd
With Roman bodies; and just heav'n thought good
To fatten twice those fields with Roman blood.
Then, after length of time, the lab'ring swains,
Who turn the turfs of those unhappy plains,
Shall rusty piles from the plough'd furrows take,
And over empty helmets pass the rake—
Amaz'd at antique titles on the stones,
And mighty reliques of gigantic bones.
 Ye home-born deities of mortal birth!
Thou father Romulus, and mother Earth,
Goddess unmov'd! whose guardian arms extend
O'er Tuscan Tiber's course, and Roman tow'rs defend;
With youthful Caesar your joint pow'rs engage,
Nor hinder him to save the sinking age.
O! let the blood, already spill'd, atone
For the past crimes of curst Laomedon!
Heav'n wants thee there; and long the gods, we know,
Have grudg'd thee, Caesar, to the world below,
Where fraud and rapine right and wrong confound,

Where impious arms from ev'ry part resound,
And monstrous crimes in ev'ry shape are crown'd.
The peaceful peasant to the wars is press'd;
The fields lie fallow in inglorious rest;
The plain no pasture to the flock affords;
The crooked scythes are straighten'd into swords:
And there Euphrates her soft offspring arms,
And here the Rhine rebellows with alarms;
The neighb'ring cities range on sev'ral sides;
Perfidious Mars long-plighted leagues divides,
And o'er the wasted world in triumph rides.
So four fierce coursers, starting to the race,
Scour through the plain, and lengthen ev'ry pace;
Nor reins, nor curbs, nor threat'ning cries, they fear,
But force along the trembling charioteer.

Dido and Aeneas

BUT ANXIOUS cares already seiz'd the queen:
She fed within her veins a flame unseen:
The hero's valour, acts, and birth, inspire
Her soul with love, and fan the secret fire.
His words, his looks, imprinted in her heart,
Improve the passion, and increase the smart.
Now, when the purple morn had chas'd away
The dewy shadows, and restor'd the day,
Her sister, first, with early care, she sought,
And thus in mournful accents eas'd her thought:
"My dearest Anna! what new dreams affright
My lab'ring soul! what visions of the night
Disturb my quiet, and distract my breast
With strange ideas of our Trojan guest!
His worth, his actions, and majestic air,
A man descended from the gods declare.
Fear ever argues a degen'rate kind:
His birth is well asserted by his mind.

Then, what he suffer'd, when by Fate betray'd!
What brave attempts for falling Troy he made!
Such were his looks, so gracefully he spoke,
That, were I not resolv'd against the yoke
Of hapless marriage—never to be curs'd
With second love, so fatal was my first—
To this one error I might yield again:
For, since Sichaeus was untimely slain,
This only man is able to subvert
The fix'd foundations of my stubborn heart.
And, to confess my frailty, to my shame,
Somewhat I find within, if not the same,
Too like the sparkles of my former flame.
But first let yawning earth a passage rend,
And let me through the dark abyss descend—
First let avenging Jove, with flames from high,
Drive down this body to the nether sky,
Condemn'd with ghosts in endless night to lie—
Before I break the plighted faith I gave!
No! he who had my vows, shall ever have;
For, whom I lov'd on earth, I worship in the grave."
She said: the tears ran gushing from her eyes,
And stopp'd her speech. Her sister thus replies:
"O dearer than the vital air I breathe!
Will you to grief your blooming years bequeath,
Condemn'd to waste in woes your lonely life,
Without the joys of mother, or of wife?
Think you, these tears, this pompous train of woe,
Are known or valu'd by the ghosts below?
I grant, that, while your sorrows yet were green,
It well became a woman and a queen,
The vows of Tyrian princes to neglect,
To scorn Iarbas, and his love reject,
With all the Libyan lords of mighty name:
But will you fight against a pleasing flame?
This little spot of land, which heav'n bestows,
On ev'ry side is hemm'd with warlike foes:

Gaetulian cities here are spread around,
And fierce Numidians there your frontiers bound:
Here lies a barren waste of thirsty land,
And there the Syrtes raise the moving sand:
Barcaean troops besiege the narrow shore;
And, from the sea, Pygmalion threatens more.
Propitious heav'n, and gracious Juno, lead
This wand'ring navy to your needful aid:
How will your empire spread, your city rise,
From such a union, and with such allies!
Implore the favour of the pow'rs above;
And leave the conduct of the rest to love.
Continue still your hospitable way,
And still invent occasions of their stay,
Till storms and winter winds shall cease to threat,
And planks and oars repair their shatter'd fleet."
These words, which from a friend and sister came,
With ease resolv'd the scruples of her fame,
And added fury to the kindled flame.
Inspir'd with hope, the project they pursue;
On ev'ry altar sacrifice renew;
A chosen ewe of two years old they pay
To Ceres, Bacchus, and the god of day.
Preferring Juno's pow'r, (for Juno ties
The nuptial knot, and makes the marriage-joys)
The beauteous queen before her altar stands,
And holds the golden goblet in her hands.
A milk-white heifer she with flow'rs adorns,
And pours the ruddy wine betwixt her horns;
And, while the priests with pray'r the gods invoke,
She feeds their altars with Sabaean smoke,
With hourly care the sacrifice renews,
And anxiously the panting entrails views.
What priestly rites, alas! what pious art,
What vows, avail to cure a bleeding heart?
A gentle fire she feeds within her veins,
Where the soft god secure in silence reigns.

Sick with desire, and seeking him she loves,
From street to street the raving Dido roves.
So, when the watchful shepherd, from the blind,
Wounds with a random shaft the careless hind,
Distracted with her pain she flies the woods,
Bounds o'er the lawn, and seeks the silent floods—
With fruitless care; for still the fatal dart
Sticks in her side, and rankles in her heart.
And now she leads the Trojan chief along
The lofty walls, amidst the busy throng;
Displays her Tyrian wealth, and rising town,
Which love, without his labour, makes his own.
This pomp she shows, to tempt her wond'ring guest:
Her falt'ring tongue forbids to speak the rest.
When day declines, and feasts renew the night,
Still on his face she feeds her famish'd sight;
She longs again to hear the prince relate
His own adventures, and the Trojan fate.
He tells it o'er and o'er; but still in vain;
For still she begs to hear it once again.
The hearer on the speaker's mouth depends;
And thus the tragic story never ends.
Then, when they part, when Phoebe's pale light
Withdraws, and falling stars to sleep invite,
She last remains, when ev'ry guest is gone,
Sits on the bed he press'd, and sighs alone;
Absent, her absent hero sees and hears;
Or in her bosom young Ascanius bears,
And seeks the father's image in the child,
If love by likeness might be so beguil'd.
Meantime the rising tow'rs are at a stand:
No labours exercise the youthful band;
Nor use of arts, nor toils of arms they know:
The mole is left unfinish'd to the foe;
The mounds, the works, the walls, neglected lie,
Short of their promis'd height, that seem'd to threat the sky.
But, when imperial Juno, from above,

Saw Dido fetter'd in the chains of love,
Hot with the venom which her veins inflam'd,
And by no sense of shame to be reclaim'd,
With soothing words to Venus she begun:
"High praises, endless honours, you have won,
And mighty trophies, with your worthy son!
Two gods a silly woman have undone!
Nor am I ignorant, you both suspect
This rising city, which my hands erect:
But shall celestial discord never cease?
'Tis better ended in a lasting peace.
You stand possess'd of all your soul desir'd;
Poor Dido with consuming love is fir'd.
Your Trojan with my Tyrian let us join;
So Dido shall be yours, Aeneas mine—
One common kingdom, one united line.
Eliza shall a Dardan lord obey,
And lofty Carthage for a dow'r convey."
Then Venus (who her hidden fraud descry'd,
Which would the sceptre of the world misguide
To Libyan shores) thus artfully reply'd:
"Who, but a fool, would wars with Juno choose,
And such alliance and such gifts refuse,
If Fortune with our joint desires comply?
The doubt is all from Jove, and destiny;
Lest he forbid, with absolute command,
To mix the people in one common land—
Or will the Trojan and the Tyrian line
In lasting leagues and sure succession, join.
But you, the partner of his bed and throne,
May move his mind:—my wishes are your own."
"Mine," said imperial Juno, "be the care:—
Time urges now:—to perfect this affair,
Attend my counsel, and the secret share.
When next the Sun his rising light displays,
And gilds the world below with purple rays,
The queen, Aeneas, and the Tyrian court,

Shall to the shady woods, for silvan game, resort.
There, while the huntsmen pitch their toils around,
And cheerful horns, from side to side, resound,
A pitchy cloud shall cover all the plain,
With hail, and thunder, and tempestuous rain:
The fearful train shall take their speedy flight,
Dispers'd, and all involv'd in gloomy night:
One cave a grateful shelter shall afford
To the fair princess and the Trojan lord.
I will myself the bridal bed prepare,
If you, to bless the nuptials, will be there:
So shall their loves be crown'd with due delights,
And Hymen shall be present at the rites."
The queen of love consents, and closely smiles
At her vain project, and discover'd wiles.
The rosy morn was risen from the main,
And horns and hounds awake the princely train.
They issue early through the city gate,
Where the more wakeful huntsmen ready wait,
With nets, and toils, and darts, beside the force
Of Spartan dogs, and swift Massylian horse.
The Tyrian peers, and officers of state,
For the slow queen, in ante-chambers wait:
Her lofty courser, in the court below,
(Who his majestic rider seems to know)
Proud of his purple trappings, paws the ground,
And champs the golden bit, and spreads the foam around.
The queen at length appears; on either hand,
The brawny guards in martial order stand
A flow'r'd cymar with golden fringe she wore,
And at her back a golden quiver bore:
Her flowing hair a golden caul restrains;
A golden clasp the Tyrian robe sustains.
Then young Ascanius, with a sprightly grace,
Leads on the Trojan youth to view the chase.
But far above the rest in beauty shines
The great Aeneas, when the troop he joins;

Like fair Apollo, when he leaves the frost
Of wint'ry Xanthus, and the Lycian coast,
When to his native Delos he resorts,
Ordains the dances, and renews the sports;
Where painted Scythians, mix'd with Cretan bands,
Before the joyful altars join their hands:
Himself, on Cynthus walking, sees below
The merry madness of the sacred show.
Green wreaths of bays his length of hair inclose:
A golden fillet binds his awful brows:
His quiver sounds.—Not less the prince is seen
In manly presence, or in lofty mien.
Now had they reach'd the hills, and storm'd the seat
Of savage beasts, in dens, their last retreat.
The cry pursues the mountain goats: they bound
From rock to rock, and keep the craggy ground:
Quite otherwise the stags, a trembling train,
In herds unsingled, scour the dusty plain,
And a long chase, in open view, maintain.
The glad Ascanius, as his courser guides,
Spurs through the vale, and these and those outrides.
His horse's flanks and sides are forc'd to feel
The clanking lash, and goring of the steel.
Impatiently he views the feeble prey,
Wishing some nobler beast to cross his way,
And rather would the tusky boar attend,
Or see the tawny lion downward bend.
Meantime, the gath'ring clouds obscure the skies:
From pole to pole the forky lightning flies;
The rattling thunders roll; and Juno pours
A wint'ry deluge down, and sounding show'rs.
The company, dispers'd, to coverts ride,
And seek the homely cots, or mountain's hollow side.
The rapid rains, descending from the hills,
To rolling torrents raise the creeping rills.
The queen and prince, as Love or Fortune guides,
One common cavern in her bosom hides.

Then first the trembling earth the signal gave;
And flashing fires enlighten all the cave:
Hell from below, and Juno from above,
And howling nymphs, were conscious to their love.
From this ill-omen'd hour, in time arose
Debate and death, and all succeeding woes.
 The queen, whom sense of honour could not move,
No longer made a secret of her love,
But call'd it marriage, by that specious name
To veil the crime, and sanctify the shame.
 The loud report through Libyan cities goes.
Fame, the great ill, from small beginnings grows—
Swift from the first; and ev'ry moment brings
New vigour to her flights, new pinions to her wings.
Soon grows the pigmy to gigantic size;
Her feet on earth, her forehead in the skies.
Enrag'd against the gods, revengeful Earth
Produc'd her, last of the Titanian birth—
(Swift is her walk, more swift her winged haste)—
A monstrous phantom, horrible and vast.
As many plumes as raise her lofty flight,
So many piercing eyes enlarge her sight:
Millions of op'ning mouths to Fame belong;
And ev'ry mouth is furnish'd with a tongue;
And round with list'ning ears the flying plague is hung.
She fills the peaceful universe with cries:
No slumbers ever close her wakeful eyes:
By day, from lofty tow'rs her head she shews,
And spreads through trembling crowds disastrous news;
With court informers haunts, and royal spies;
Things done relates; not done she feigns; and mingles truth
 with lies.
Talk is her bus'ness; and her chief delight
To tell of prodigies, and cause affright.
She fills the people's ears with Dido's name,
Who, "lost to honour and the sense of shame,
Admits into her throne and nuptial bed

A wand'ring guest, who from his country fled:
Whole days with him she passes in delights,
And wastes in luxury long winter nights,
Forgetful of her fame, and royal trust,
Dissolv'd in ease, abandon'd to her lust."
The goddess widely spreads the loud report,
And flies at length to king Iarbas' court.
When first possess'd with this unwelcome news,
Whom did he not, of men and gods, accuse?
This prince, from ravish'd Garamantis born,
A hundred temples did with spoils adorn,
In Ammon's honour, his celestial sire;
A hundred altars fed with wakeful fire;
And, through his vast dominions, priests ordain'd,
Whose watchful care these holy rites maintain'd.
The gates and columns were with garlands crown'd,
And blood of victim beasts enrich'd the ground.
He—when he heard a fugitive could move
The Tyrian princess, who disdain'd his love,
His breast with fury burn'd, his eyes with fire—
Mad with despair, impatient with desire—
Then on the sacred altars pouring wine,
He thus with pray'rs implor'd his sire divine:
"Great Jove, propitious to the Moorish race,
Who feast on painted beds, with off'rings grace
Thy temples, and adore thy pow'r divine
With blood of victims, and with sparkling wine!
See'st thou not this? or do we fear in vain
Thy boasted thunder, and thy thoughtless reign?
Do thy broad hands the forky lightnings lance?
Thine are the bolts, or the blind work of chance?
A wand'ring woman builds, within our state,
A little town, bought at an easy rate;
She pays me homage; (and my grants allow
A narrow space of Libyan lands to plough)
Yet, scorning me, by passion blindly led,
Admits a banish'd Trojan to her bed!

And now this other Paris, with his train
Of conquer'd cowards, must in Afric reign!
(Whom, what they are, their looks and garb confess,
Their locks with oil perfum'd, their Lydian dress.)
He takes the spoil, enjoys the princely dame;
And I, rejected I, adore an empty name!"
His vows, in haughty terms, he thus preferr'd,
And held his altar's horns: the mighty Thund'rer heard,
Then cast his eyes on Carthage, where he found
The lustful pair in lawless pleasure drown'd,
Lost in their loves, insensible of shame,
And both forgetful of their better fame.
He calls Cyllenius; and the god attends;
By whom his menacing command he sends:
"Go! mount the western winds, and cleave the sky;
Then, with a swift descent, to Carthage fly:
There find the Trojan chief, who wastes his days
In slothful riot and inglorious ease,
Nor minds the future city, giv'n by Fate.
To him this message from my mouth relate:
Not so fair Venus hop'd, when twice she won
Thy life with pray'rs; nor promis'd such a son.
Hers was a hero, destin'd to command
A martial race, and rule the Latian land;
Who should his ancient line from Teucer draw;
And on the conquer'd world impose the law.
If glory cannot move a mind so mean,
Nor future praise from fading pleasure wean;
Yet why should he defraud his son of fame,
And grudge the Romans their immortal name?
What are his vain designs? what hopes he more
From his long ling'ring on a hostile shore,
Regardless to redeem his honour lost,
And, for his race, to gain th' Ausonian coast?
Bid him with speed the Tyrian court forsake:
With this command the slumb'ring warrior wake."
Hermes obeys; with golden pinions binds

His flying feet, and mounts the western winds:
And, whether o'er the seas or earth he flies,
With rapid force they bear him down the skies.
But first he grasps within his awful hand
The mark of sov'reign pow'r, his magic wand:
With this, he draws the ghosts from hollow graves;
With this, he drives them down the Stygian waves;
With this, he seals in sleep the wakeful sight,
And eyes, though clos'd in death, restores to light.
Thus arm'd, the god begins his airy race,
And drives the racking clouds along the liquid space;
Now sees the tops of Atlas, as he flies,
Whose brawny back supports the starry skies—
Atlas, whose head, with piny forests crown'd,
Is beaten by the winds—with foggy vapours bound.
Snows hide his shoulders: from beneath his chin,
The founts of rolling streams their race begin:
A beard of ice on his large breast depends.—
Here, pois'd upon his wings, the god descends:
Then, rested thus, he from the tow'ring height
Plung'd downward with precipitated flight,
Lights on the seas, and skims along the flood.
As water-fowl, who seek their fishy food,
Less, and yet less, to distant prospect show;
By turns they dance aloft, and dive below:
Like these, the steerage of his wings he plies,
And near the surface of the water flies;
Till, having pass'd the seas, and cross'd the sands,
He clos'd his wings, and stoop'd on Libyan lands,
Where shepherds once were hous'd in homely sheds,
Now tow'rs within the clouds advance their heads
Arriving there, he found the Trojan prince
New ramparts raising for the town's defence.
A purple scarf, with gold embroider'd o'er,
(Queen Dido's gift) about his waist he wore:
A sword, with glitt'ring gems diversify'd,
For ornament, not use, hung idly by his side.

Then thus, with winged words, the god began,
Resuming his own shape—"Degen'rate man!
Thou woman's property! what mak'st thou here,
These foreign walls and Tyrian tow'rs to rear,
Forgetful of thy own? All-pow'rful Jove,
Who sways the world below and heav'n above,
Has sent me down with this severe command:
What means thy ling'ring in the Libyan land?
If glory cannot move a mind so mean,
Nor future praise from flitting pleasure wean,
Regard the fortunes of thy rising heir:
The promis'd crown let young Ascanius wear,
To whom th' Ausonian sceptre, and the state
Of Rome's imperial name, is ow'd by Fate."
So spoke the god; and, speaking, took his flight,
Involv'd in clouds; and vanish'd out of sight.
The pious prince was seiz'd with sudden fear:
Mute was his tongue, and upright stood his hair.
Revolving in his mind the stern command,
He longs to fly, and loaths the charming land.
What should he say? or how should he begin?
What course, alas! remains, to steer between
Th' offended lover and the pow'rful queen?
This way, and that, he turns his anxious mind,
And all expedients tries, and none can find.
Fix'd on the deed, but doubtful of the means—
After long thought, to this advice he leans:
Three chiefs he calls, commands them to repair
The fleet, and ship their men, with silent care.
Some plausible pretence he bids them find,
To colour what in secret he design'd.
Himself, meantime, the softest hours would choose,
Before the love-sick lady heard the news;
And move her tender mind by slow degrees,
To suffer what the sov'reign pow'r decrees:
Jove will inspire him, when, and what to say.—
They hear with pleasure, and with haste obey.

But soon the queen perceives the thin disguise:
(What arts can blind a jealous woman's eyes?)
She was the first to find the secret fraud,
Before the fatal news was blaz'd abroad.
Love the first motions of the lover hears,
Quick to presage, and ev'n in safety fears.
Nor impious Fame was wanting, to report
The ships repair'd, the Trojans' thick resort,
And purpose to forsake the Tyrian court.
Frantic with fear, impatient of the wound,
And impotent of mind, she roves the city round.
Less wild the Bacchanalian dames appear,
When, from afar, their nightly god they hear,
And howl about the hills, and shake the wreathy spear.
At length she finds the dear perfidious man;
Prevents his form'd excuse, and thus began:
"Base and ungrateful! could you hope to fly,
And, undiscover'd, 'scape a lover's eye?
Nor could my kindness your compassion move,
Nor plighted vows, nor dearer bands of love?
Or is the death of a despairing queen
Not worth preventing, though too well foreseen?
Ev'n when the wint'ry winds command your stay,
You dare the tempests, and defy the sea!
False, as you are, suppose you were not bound
To lands unknown, and foreign coasts to sound;
Were Troy restor'd, and Priam's happy reign,
Now durst you tempt, for Troy, the raging main?
See, whom you fly! am I the foe you shun?
Now, by those holy vows, so late begun,
By this right hand, (since I have nothing more
To challenge, but the faith you gave before)
I beg you, by these tears too truly shed,
By the new pleasures of our nuptial bed;
If ever Dido, when you most were kind,
Were pleasing in your eyes, or touch'd your mind;
By these my pray'rs, if pray'rs may yet have place,

Pity the fortunes of a falling race!
For you, I have provok'd a tyrant's hate,
Incens'd the Libyan and the Tyrian state;
For you alone, I suffer in my fame,
Bereft of honour, and expos'd to shame!
Whom have I now to trust, ungrateful guest?
(That only name remains of all the rest!)
What have I left? or whither can I fly?
Must I attend Pygmalion's cruelty,
Or till Iarbas shall in triumph lead
A queen, that proudly scorn'd his proffer'd bed?
Had you deferr'd, at least, your hasty flight,
And left behind some pledge of our delight,
Some babe to bless the mother's mournful sight,
Some young Aeneas to supply your place,
Whose features might express his father's face;
I should not then complain to live bereft
Of all my husband, or be wholly left."
 Here paus'd the queen. Unmov'd he holds his eyes,
By Jove's command; nor suffer'd love to rise,
Though heaving in his heart; and thus at length replies:
 "Fair queen, you never can enough repeat
Your boundless favours, or I own my debt;
Nor can my mind forget Eliza's name,
While vital breath inspires this mortal frame.
This only let me speak in my defence—
I never hop'd a secret flight from hence,
Much less pretended to the lawful claim
Of sacred nuptials, or a husband's name.
For, if indulgent Heav'n would leave me free,
And not submit my life to Fate's decree,
My choice would lead me to the Trojan shore,
Those reliques to review, their dust adore,
And Priam's ruin'd palace to restore.
But now the Delphian oracle commands,
And Fate invites me to the Latian lands.
That is the promis'd place to which I steer;

And all my vows are terminated there.
If you, a Tyrian and a stranger born,
With walls and tow'rs a Libyan town adorn,
Why may not we—like you, a foreign race—
Like you, seek shelter in a foreign place?
As often as the night obscures the skies
With humid shades, or twinkling stars arise,
Anchises' angry ghost in dreams appears,
Chides my delay, and fills my soul with fears:
And young Ascanius justly may complain
Of his defrauded fate, and destin'd reign.
Ev'n now the herald of the gods appear'd—
Waking I saw him, and his message heard.
From Jove he came commission'd, heav'nly bright
With radiant beams, and manifest to sight:
(The sender and the sent I both attest)
These walls he enter'd, and those words express'd.
Fair queen, oppose not what the gods command:
Forc'd by my fate, I leave your happy land."
Thus while he spoke, already she began
With sparkling eyes to view the guilty man;
From head to foot, survey'd his person o'er,
Nor longer these outrageous threats forbore:
"False as thou art, and more than false, forsworn!
Not sprung from noble blood, nor goddess-born,
But hewn from harden'd entrails of a rock!
And rough Hyrcanian tigers gave thee suck!
Why should I fawn? what have I worse to fear?
Did he once look, or lent a list'ning ear,
Sigh'd when I sobb'd, or shed one kindly tear?
All, symptoms of a base ungrateful mind,
So foul, that, which is worse, 'tis hard to find.
Of man's injustice why should I complain?
The gods, and Jove himself, behold in vain
Triumphant treason: yet no thunder flies;
Nor Juno views my wrongs with equal eyes:
Faithless is earth, and faithless are the skies!

Justice is fled, and truth is now no more!
I sav'd the shipwreck'd exile on my shore;
With needful food his hungry Trojans fed;
I took the traitor to my throne and bed:
Fool that I was, ('tis little to repeat
The rest) I stor'd and rigg'd his ruin'd fleet.
I rave! I rave! A god's command he pleads,
And makes heav'n accessory to his deeds.
Now Lycian lots, and now the Delian god,
Now Hermes is employ'd from Jove's abode,
To warn him hence; as if the peaceful state
Of heav'nly pow'rs were touch'd with human fate!
But go! thy flight no longer I detain—
Go! seek thy promis'd kingdom through the main!
Yet, if the heav'ns will hear my pious vow,
The faithless waves, not half so false as thou,
Or secret sands, shall sepulchres afford
To thy proud vessels, and their perjur'd lord.
Then shalt thou call on injur'd Dido's name·
Dido shall come in a black sulph'ry flame,
When death has once dissolv'd her mortal frame—
Shall smile to see the traitor vainly weep:
Her angry ghost, arising from the deep,
Shall haunt thee waking, and disturb thy sleep.
At least my shade thy punishment shall know;
And Fame shall spread the pleasing news below."
 Abruptly here she stops—then turns away
Her loathing eyes, and shuns the sight of day.
Amaz'd he stood, revolving in his mind,
What speech to frame, and what excuse to find.
Her fearful maids their fainting mistress led,
And softly laid her on her iv'ry bed.
 But good Aeneas, though he much desir'd
To give that pity which her grief requir'd—
Though much he mourn'd, and labour'd with his love—
Resolv'd at length, obeys the will of Jove;
Reviews his forces: they, with early care,

Unmoor their vessels, and for sea prepare.
The fleet is soon afloat, in all its pride,
And well-caulk'd galleys in the harbour ride.
Then oaks for oars they fell'd; or, as they stood,
Of its green arms despoil'd the growing wood,
Studious of flight. The beach is cover'd o'er
With Trojan bands, that blacken all the shore:
On ev'ry side are seen, descending down,
Thick swarms of soldiers, loaden from the town.
Thus, in battalia, march embody'd ants,
Fearful of winter, and of future wants,
T' invade the corn, and to their cells convey
The plunder'd forage of their yellow prey.
The sable troops, along the narrow tracks,
Scarce bear the weighty burden on their backs:
Some set their shoulders to the pond'rous grain;
Some guard the spoil; some lash the lagging train;
All ply their sev'ral tasks, and equal toil sustain.

What pangs the tender breast of Dido tore,
When, from the tow'r, she saw the cover'd shore,
And heard the shouts of sailors from afar,
Mix'd with the murmurs of the wat'ry war!
All-pow'rful Love! what changes canst thou cause
In human hearts, subjected to thy laws!
Once more her haughty soul the tyrant bends:
To pray'rs and mean submissions she descends.
No female arts or aids she left untry'd,
Nor counsels unexplor'd, before she died.

"Look, Anna! look! the Trojans crowd to sea;
They spread their canvas, and their anchors weigh.
The shouting crew their ships with garlands bind,
Invoke the sea-gods, and invite the wind.
Could I have thought this threat'ning blow so near,
My tender soul had been forewarn'd to bear.
But do not you my last request deny:
With yon perfidious man your int'rest try,
And bring me news, if I must live or die.

You are his fav'rite: you alone can find
The dark recesses of his inmost mind:
In all his trusted secrets you have part,
And know the soft approaches to his heart.
Haste then, and humbly seek my haughty foe;
Tell him, I did not with the Grecians go,
Nor did my fleet against his friends employ,
Nor swore the ruin of unhappy Troy,
Nor mov'd with hands profane his father's dust:
Why should he then reject a suit so just?
Whom does he shun? and whither would he fly?
Can he this last, this only pray'r deny?
Let him, at least, his dang'rous flight delay,
Wait better winds, and hope a calmer sea.
The nuptials he disclaims, I urge no more:
Let him pursue the promis'd Latian shore.
A short delay is all I ask him now—
A pause of grief, an interval from woe,
Till my soft soul be temper'd to sustain
Accustom'd sorrows, and inur'd to pain.
If you in pity grant this one request,
My death shall glut the hatred of his breast."
 This mournful message pious Anna bears,
And seconds, with her own, her sister's tears:
But all her arts are still employ'd in vain:
Again she comes, and is refus'd again.
His harden'd heart nor pray'rs nor threat'nings move:
Fate, and the god, had stopp'd his ears to love.
 As, when the winds their airy quarrel try,
Justling from ev'ry quarter of the sky,
This way and that the mountain oak they bend,
His boughs they shatter, and his branches rend;
With leaves and falling mast they spread the ground:
The hollow valleys echo to the sound:
Unmov'd, the royal plant their fury mocks,
Or, shaken, clings more closely to the rocks:
Far as he shoots his tow'ring head on high,

So deep in earth his fix'd foundations lie.
No less a storm the Trojan hero bears;
Thick messages and loud complaints he hears,
And bandy'd words, still beating on his ears.
Sighs, groans, and tears, proclaim his inward pains;
But the firm purpose of his heart remains.

The wretched queen, pursu'd by cruel Fate,
Begins at length the light of heav'n to hate,
And loaths to live. Then dire portents she sees,
To hasten on the death her soul decrees—
Strange to relate: for when, before the shrine,
She pours in sacrifice the purple wine,
The purple wine is turn'd to putrid blood;
And the white offer'd milk converts to mud.
This dire presage, to her alone reveal'd,
From all, and ev'n her sister, she conceal'd.

A marble temple stood within the grove,
Sacred to death, and to her murder'd love:
That honour'd chapel she had hung around
With snowy fleeces, and with garlands crown'd.
Oft, when she visited this lonely dome,
Strange voices issu'd from her husband's tomb:
She thought she heard him summon her away,
Invite her to his grave, and chide her stay.
Hourly 'tis heard, when, with a boding note,
The solitary screech-owl strains her throat,
And, on a chimney's top or turret's height,
With songs obscene, disturbs the silence of the night.
Besides, old prophecies augment her fears;
And stern Aeneas in her dreams appears,
Disdainful as by day: she seems, alone,
To wander, in her sleep, through ways unknown,
Guideless and dark; or, in a desert plain,
To seek her subjects, and to seek in vain—
Like Pentheus, when, distracted with his fear,
He saw two suns, and double Thebes, appear;
Or mad Orestes, when his mother's ghost

Full in his face infernal torches toss'd,
And shook her snaky locks: he shuns the sight,
Flies o'er the stage, surpris'd with mortal fright:
The Furies guard the door, and intercept his flight.
 Now, sinking underneath a load of grief,
From death alone she seeks her last relief:
The time and means resolv'd within her breast,
She to her mournful sister thus address'd:
(Dissembling hope, her cloudy front she clears,
And a false vigour in her eyes appears.)
 "Rejoice!" she said. "Instructed from above,
My lover I shall gain, or lose my love.
Nigh rising Atlas, next the falling sun,
Long tracts of Aethiopian climates run:
There a Massylian priestess I have found,
Honour'd for age, for magic arts renown'd:
Th' Hesperian temple was her trusted care;
'Twas she supply'd the wakeful dragon's fare.
She, poppy-seeds in honey taught to steep,
Reclaim'd his rage, and sooth'd him into sleep:
She watch'd the golden fruit. Her charms unbind
The chains of love, or fix them on the mind:
She stops the torrents, leaves the channel dry,
Repels the stars, and backward bears the sky.
The yawning earth rebellows to her call;
Pale ghosts ascend; and mountain ashes fall.
Witness, ye gods, and thou my better part,
How loth I am to try this impious art!
Within the secret court, with silent care,
Erect a lofty pile, expos'd in air:
Hang, on the topmost part, the Trojan vest,
Spoils, arms, and presents, of my faithless guest.
Next, under these, the bridal bed be plac'd,
Where I my ruin in his arms embrac'd.
All reliques of the wretch are doom'd to fire;
For so the priestess and her charms require."
 Thus far she said, and further speech forbears.

A mortal paleness in her face appears:
Yet the mistrustless Anna could not find
The secret fun'ral, in these rites design'd;
Nor thought so dire a rage possess'd her mind.
Unknowing of a train conceal'd so well,
She fear'd no worse than when Sichaeus fell;
Therefore obeys. The fatal pile they rear,
Within the secret court, expos'd in air.
The cloven holms and pines are heap'd on high;
And garlands on the hollow spaces lie.
Sad cypress, vervain, yew, compose the wreath;
And ev'ry baleful green denoting death.
The queen, determin'd to the fatal deed,
The spoils and sword he left, in order spread,
And the man's image on the nuptial bed.
And now (the sacred altars plac'd around)
The priestess enters, with her hair unbound,
And thrice invokes the pow'rs below the ground.
Night, Erebus, and Chaos, she proclaims,
And threefold Hecat, with her hundred names,
And three Dianas: next she sprinkles round,
With feign'd Avernian drops, the hallow'd ground;
Culls hoary simples, found by Phoebe's light,
With brazen sickles reap'd at noon of night;
Then mixes baleful juices in the bowl,
And cuts the forehead of a new-born foal,
Robbing the mother's love.—The destin'd queen
Observes, assisting at the rites obscene:
A leaven'd cake in her devoted hands
She holds; and next the highest altar stands:
One tender foot was shod, her other bare;
Girt was her gather'd gown, and loose her hair.
Thus dress'd, she summon'd, with her dying breath,
The heav'ns, and planets conscious of her death,
And ev'ry pow'r, if any rules above,
Who minds or who revenges injur'd love.
'Twas dead of night, when weary bodies close

Their eyes in balmy sleep, and soft repose:
The winds no longer whisper through the woods,
Nor murm'ring tides disturb the gentle floods.
The stars in silent order mov'd around;
And Peace, with downy wings, was brooding on the ground.
The flocks and herds, and particolour'd fowl
Which haunt the woods or swim the weedy pool,
Stretch'd on the quiet earth, securely lay,
Forgetting the past labours of the day.
All else of nature's common gift partake:
Unhappy Dido was alone awake.
Nor sleep nor ease the furious queen can find:
Sleep fled her eyes, as quiet fled her mind.
Despair, and rage, and love, divide her heart;
Despair and rage had some, but love the greater part.
Then thus she said within her secret mind:
"What shall I do? what succour can I find?
Become a suppliant to Iarbas' pride,
And take my turn, to court and be deny'd?
Shall I with this ungrateful Trojan go,
Forsake an empire, and attend a foe?
Himself I refug'd, and his train reliev'd—
'Tis true—but am I sure to be receiv'd?
Can gratitude in Trojan souls have place?
Laomedon still lives in all his race!
Then, shall I seek alone the churlish crew,
Or with my fleet their flying sails pursue?
What force have I, but those, whom scarce before
I drew reluctant from their native shore?
Will they again embark at my desire,
Once more sustain the seas, and quit their second Tyre?
Rather with steel thy guilty breast invade,
And take the fortune thou thyself hast made.
Your pity, sister, first seduc'd my mind,
Or seconded too well what I design'd.
These dear-bought pleasures had I never known,
Had I continu'd free, and still my own—

Avoiding love—I had not found despair,
But shar'd with savage beasts the common air.
Like them, a lonely life I might have led,
Not mourn'd the living, nor disturb'd the dead."
These thoughts she brooded in her anxious breast.—
On board, the Trojan found more easy rest.
Resolv'd to sail, in sleep he pass'd the night;
And order'd all things for his early flight.
To whom once more the winged god appears:
His former youthful mien and shape he wears,
And with this new alarm invades his ears:
"Sleep'st thou, O goddess-born? and canst thou dr
Thy needful cares, so near a hostile town,
Beset with foes; nor hear'st the western gales
Invite thy passage, and inspire thy sails?
She harbours in her heart a furious hate,
(And thou shalt find the dire effects too late)
Fix'd on revenge, and obstinate to die.
Haste swiftly hence, while thou hast pow'r to fly.
The sea with ships will soon be cover'd o'er,
And blazing firebrands kindle all the shore.
Prevent her rage, while night obscures the skies;
And sail before the purple morn arise.
Who knows what hazards thy delay may bring?
Woman's a various and a changeful thing."
Thus Hermes in the dream; then took his flight,
Aloft in air unseen, and mix'd with night.
Twice warn'd by the celestial messenger,
The pious prince arose with hasty fear;
Then rous'd his drowsy train without delay:
"Haste to your banks! your crooked anchors weigh,
And spread your flying sails, and stand to sea!
A god commands: he stood before my sight,
And urg'd us once again to speedy flight.
O sacred pow'r! what pow'r soe'er thou art,
To thy blest orders I resign my heart.
Lead thou the way; protect thy Trojan bands;

And prosper the design thy will commands."
He said; and, drawing forth his flaming sword,
His thund'ring arm divides the many-twisted cord.
An emulating zeal inspires his train:
They run; they snatch; they rush into the main.
With headlong haste, they leave the desert shores,
And brush the liquid seas with lab'ring oars.
Aurora now had left her saffron bed,
And beams of early light the heav'ns o'erspread,
When, from a tow'r, the queen, with wakeful eyes,
Saw day point upward from the rosy skies.
She look'd to seaward: but the sea was void,
And scarce in ken the sailing ships descry'd.
Stung with despite, and furious with despair,
She struck her trembling breast, and tore her hair.
"And shall th' ungrateful traitor go," (she said)
"My land forsaken, and my love betray'd?
Shall we not arm? not rush from ev'ry street,
To follow, sink, and burn, his perjur'd fleet?
Haste! haul my galleys out! pursue the foe!
Bring flaming brands! set sail, and swiftly row!—
What have I said? Where am I? Fury turns
My brain; and my distemper'd bosom burns.
Then, when I gave my person and my throne,
This hate, this rage, had been more timely shown.
See now the promis'd faith, the vaunted name,
The pious man, who, rushing through the flame,
Preserv'd his gods, and to the Phrygian shore
The burden of his feeble father bore!
I should have torn him piece-meal—strow'd in floods
His scatter'd limbs, or left expos'd in woods—
Destroy'd his friends and son—and from the fire
Have set the reeking boy before the sire.
Events are doubtful, which on battles wait!
Yet where's the doubt, to souls secure of fate?
My Tyrians, at their injur'd queen's command,
Had toss'd their fires amid the Trojan band;

At once extinguish'd all the faithless name;
And I myself, in vengeance of my shame,
Had fall'n upon the pile, to mend the fun'ral flame.
Thou Sun, who view'st at once the world below!
Thou Juno, guardian of the nuptial vow!
Thou Hecat, hearken from thy dark abodes!
Ye Furies, fiends, and violated gods!
All pow'rs invok'd with Dido's dying breath,
Attend her curses, and avenge her death!
If so the Fates ordain, and Jove commands,
Th' ungrateful wretch should find the Latian lands,
Yet let a race untam'd, and haughty foes,
His peaceful entrance with dire arms oppose:
Oppress'd with numbers in th' unequal field,
His men discourag'd, and himself expell'd,
Let him for succour sue from place to place,
Torn from his subjects, and his son's embrace.
First let him see his friends in battle slain,
And their untimely fate lament in vain:
And when, at length, the cruel war shall cease,
On hard conditions may he buy his peace:
Nor let him then enjoy supreme command;
But fall, untimely, by some hostile hand,
And lie unbury'd on the barren sand!
These are my pray'rs, and this my dying will:
And you, my Tyrians, ev'ry curse fulfill.
Perpetual hate and mortal wars proclaim
Against the prince, the people, and the name.
These grateful off'rings on my grave bestow;
Nor league, nor love, the jarring nations know!
Now, and from hence in ev'ry future age,
When rage excites your arms, and strength supplies the rage,
Rise some avenger of our Libyan blood!
With fire and sword pursue the perjur'd brood!
Our arms, our seas, our shores, oppos'd to theirs—
And the same hate descend on all our heirs!"
This said, within her anxious mind she weighs

The means of cutting short her odious days.
Then to Sichaeus' nurse she briefly said,
(For, when she left her country, hers was dead)
"Go, Barce, call my sister. Let her care
The solemn rites of sacrifice prepare;
The sheep, and all th' atoning off'rings, bring;
Sprinkling her body from the crystal spring
With living drops; then let her come; and thou
With sacred fillets bind thy hoary brow.
Thus will I pay my vows to Stygian Jove,
And end the cares of my disastrous love;
Then cast the Trojan image on the fire;
And, as that burns, my passion shall expire."
The nurse moves onward with officious care,
And all the speed her aged limbs can bear.
But furious Dido, with dark thoughts involv'd,
Shook at the mighty mischief she resolv'd.
With livid spots distinguish'd was her face;
Red were her rolling eyes, and discompos'd her pace:
Ghastly she gaz'd; with pain she drew her breath;
And nature shiver'd at approaching death.
Then swiftly to the fatal place she pass'd,
And mounts the fun'ral pile with furious haste;
Unsheaths the sword the Trojan left behind,
(Not for so dire an enterprise design'd.)
But when she view'd the garments loosely spread,
Which once he wore, and saw the conscious bed,
She paus'd, and, with a sigh, the robes embrac'd,
Then on the couch her trembling body cast,
Repress'd the ready tears, and spoke her last:
"Dear pledges of my love while heav'n so pleas'd,
Receive a soul, of mortal anguish eas'd.
My fatal course is finish'd; and I go,
A glorious name, among the ghosts below.
A lofty city by my hands is rais'd;
Pygmalion punish'd, and my lord appeas'd.
What could my fortune have afforded more,

Had the false Trojan never touch'd my shore?"
Then kiss'd the couch; and "Must I die?" she said,
"And unreveng'd? 'tis doubly to be dead!
Yet ev'n this death with pleasure I receive:
On any terms, 'tis better than to live.
These flames, from far, may the false Trojan view;
These boding omens his base flight pursue!"
She said, and struck: deep enter'd in her side
The piercing steel, with reeking purple dy'd:
Clogg'd in the wound the cruel weapon stands;
The spouting blood came streaming on her hands.
Her sad attendants saw the deadly stroke,
And with loud cries the sounding palace shook.
Distracted, from the fatal sight they fled,
And through the town the dismal rumour spread.
First from the frighted court the yell began;
Redoubled, thence from house to house it ran:
The groans of men, with shrieks, laments, and cries
Of mixing women, mount the vaulted skies.
Not less the clamour, than if—ancient Tyre,
Or the new Carthage, set by foes on fire—
The rolling ruin, with their lov'd abodes,
Involv'd the blazing temples of their gods.
Her sister hears; and, furious with despair,
She beats her breast, and rends her yellow hair,
And, calling on Eliza's name aloud,
Runs breathless to the place, and breaks the crowd.
"Was all that pomp of woe for this prepar'd,
These fires, this fun'ral pile, these altars rear'd?
Was all this train of plots contriv'd," (said she)
"All only to deceive unhappy me?
Which is the worst? Didst thou in death pretend
To scorn thy sister, or delude thy friend?
Thy summon'd sister and thy friend had come:
One sword had serv'd us both, one common tomb:
Was I to raise the pile, the pow'rs invoke,
Not to be present at the fatal stroke?

At once thou hast destroy'd thyself and me,
Thy town, thy senate, and thy colony!
Bring water! bathe the wound; while I in death
Lay close my lips to hers, and catch the flying breath."
 This said, she mounts the pile with eager haste,
And in her arms the gasping queen embrac'd;
Her temples chaf'd; and her own garments tore,
To stanch the streaming blood, and cleanse the gore.
Thrice Dido try'd to raise her drooping head,
And, fainting, thrice fell grov'ling on the bed;
Thrice op'd her heavy eyes, and saw the light;
But, having found it, sicken'd at the sight,
And clos'd her lids at last in endless night.
 Then Juno, grieving that she should sustain
A death so ling'ring, and so full of pain,
Sent Iris down, to free her from the strife
Of lab'ring nature, and dissolve her life.
For, since she died, not doom'd by heav'n's decree,
Or her own crime, but human casualty,
And rage of love, that plung'd her in despair,
The Sisters had not cut the topmost hair,
Which Proserpine and they can only know;
Nor made her sacred to the shades below.
Downward the various goddess took her flight,
And drew a thousand colours from the light;
Then stood above the dying lover's head,
And said, "I thus devote thee to the dead.
This off'ring to th' infernal gods I bear."
Thus while she spoke, she cut the fatal hair:
The struggling soul was loos'd, and life dissolv'd in air.

The Approach

THE STEEDS of Night had travel'd half the sky;
The drowsy rowers on their benches lie;
When the soft god of sleep, with easy flight,

Descends, and draws behind a trail of light.
Thou, Palinurus, art his destin'd prey;
To thee alone he takes his fatal way.
Dire dreams to thee, and iron sleep, he bears;
And, lighting on thy prow, the form of Phorbas wears.
Then thus the traitor god began his tale:
"The winds, my friend, inspire a pleasing gale;
The ships, without thy care, securely sail
Now steal an hour of sweet repose; and I
Will take the rudder, and thy room supply."
To whom the yawning pilot, half asleep:
"Me dost thou bid to trust the treach'rous deep,
The harlot smiles of her dissembling face,
And to her faith commit the Trojan race?
Shall I believe the Siren South again,
And, oft betray'd, not know the monster main?"
He said: his fasten'd hands the rudder keep;
And, fix'd on heav'n, his eyes repel invading sleep.
The god was wroth, and at his temples threw
A branch in Lethe dipp'd, and drunk with Stygian dew:
The pilot, vanquish'd by the pow'r divine,
Soon clos'd his swimming eyes, and lay supine.
Scarce were his limbs extended at their length;
The god, insulting with superior strength,
Fell heavy on him, plung'd him in the sea,
And, with the stern, the rudder tore away.
Headlong he fell, and, struggling in the main,
Cry'd out for helping hands, but cry'd in vain.
The victor daemon mounts obscure in air;
While the ship sails without the pilot's care.
On Neptune's faith the floating fleet relies:
But what the man forsook, the god supplies;
And, o'er the dang'rous deep, secure the navy flies;
Glides by the Sirens' cliffs, a shelfy coast,
Long infamous for ships and sailors lost,
And white with bones. Th' impetuous ocean roars,
And rocks rebellow from the sounding shores.

The watchful hero felt the knocks; and found
The tossing vessel sail'd on shoaly ground.
Sure of his pilot's loss, he takes himself
The helm, and steers aloof, and shuns the shelf.
Inly he griev'd, and, groaning from his breast,
Deplor'd his death; and thus his pain express'd:
"For faith repos'd on seas, and on the flatt'ring sky,
Thy naked corpse is doom'd on shores unknown to lie."

The Underworld

He said, and wept; then spread his sails before
The winds, and reach'd at length the Cuman shore:
Their anchors dropp'd, his crew the vessels moor.
They turn their heads to sea, their sterns to land,
And greet with greedy joy th' Italian strand.
Some strike from clashing flints their fiery seed;
Some gather sticks, the kindled flames to feed,
Or search for hollow trees, and fell the woods,
Or trace through valleys the discover'd floods.
Thus while their sev'ral charges they fulfill,
The pious prince ascends the sacred hill
Where Phoebus is ador'd; and seeks the shade,
Which hides from sight his venerable maid.
Deep in a cave the Sibyl makes abode;
Thence full of fate returns, and of the god.
Through Trivia's grove they walk; and now behold,
And enter now, the temple roof'd with gold.
When Daedalus, to fly the Cretan shore,
His heavy limbs on jointed pinions bore,
(The first who sail'd in air) 'tis sung by Fame,
To the Cumaean coast at length he came,
And, here alighting, built this costly frame.
Inscrib'd to Phoebus, here he hung on high
The steerage of his wings, that cut the sky:
Then, o'er the lofty gate, his art emboss'd

Androgeos' death, and (off'rings to his ghost)
Sev'n youths from Athens yearly sent, to meet
The fate appointed by revengeful Crete.
And, next to these, the dreadful urn was plac'd,
In which the destin'd names by lots were cast.
The mournful parents stand around in tears;
And rising Crete against their shore appears.
There, too, in living sculpture, might be seen
The mad affection of the Cretan queen;
Then how she cheats her bellowing lover's eye;
The rushing leap; the doubtful progeny
(The lower part a beast, a man above)
The monument of their polluted love.
Nor far from thence he grav'd the wondrous maze,
A thousand doors, a thousand winding ways:
Here dwells the monster, hid from human view,
Not to be found, but by the faithful clue;
Till the kind artist, mov'd with pious grief,
Lent to the loving maid this last relief,
And all those erring paths describ'd so well,
That Theseus conquer'd, and the monster fell.
 Here hapless Icarus had found his part,
Had not the father's grief restrain'd his art.
He twice essay'd to cast his son in gold;
Twice from his hands he dropp'd the forming mould.
 All this with wond'ring eyes Aeneas view'd:
Each varying object his delight renew'd.
Eager to read the rest. . . . Achates came,
And by his side the mad divining dame,
The priestess of the god, Deiphobe her name.
"Time suffers not," she said, "to feed your eyes
With empty pleasures: haste the sacrifice.
Sev'n bullocks, yet unyok'd, for Phoebus choose,
And for Diana sev'n unspotted ewes."
 This said, the servants urge the sacred rites,
While to the temple she the prince invites.
A spacious cave, within its farmost part,

Was hew'd and fashion'd by laborious art,
Through the hill's hollow sides: before the place,
A hundred doors a hundred entries grace:
As many voices issue, and the sound
Of Sibyl's words as many times rebound.
Now to the mouth they come. Aloud she cries,
"This is the time! inquire your destinies!
He comes! behold the god!" Thus while she said,
(And shiv'ring at the sacred entry staid)
Her colour chang'd; her face was not the same;
And hollow groans from her deep spirit came.
Her hair stood up; convulsive rage possess'd
Her trembling limbs, and heav'd her lab'ring breast.
Greater than human kind she seem'd to look,
And, with an accent more than mortal, spoke.
Her staring eyes with sparkling fury roll;
When all the god came rushing on her soul.
Swiftly she turn'd, and, foaming as she spoke,
"Why this delay?" she cry'd—"the pow'rs invoke.
Thy pray'rs alone can open this abode;
Else vain are my demands, and dumb the god."
She said no more. The trembling Trojans hear,
O'er-spread with a damp sweat, and holy fear.
The prince himself, with awful dread possess'd,
His vows to great Apollo thus address'd:
"Indulgent god! propitious pow'r to Troy,
Swift to relieve, unwilling to destroy!
Directed by whose hand, the Dardan dart
Pierc'd the proud Grecian's only mortal part!
Thus far, by Fate's decrees, and thy commands,
Through ambient seas, and through devouring sands,
Our exil'd crew has sought th' Ausonian ground:
And now, at length, the flying coast is found.
Thus far the fate of Troy, from place to place,
With fury has pursu'd her wand'ring race.
Here cease, ye pow'rs, and let your vengeance end;
Troy is no more, and can no more offend.

And thou, O sacred maid, inspir'd to see
Th' event of things in dark futurity!
Give me, what heav'n has promis'd to my fate,
To conquer and command the Latian state;
To fix my wand'ring gods, and find a place
For the long exiles of the Trojan race.
Then shall my grateful hands a temple rear
To the twin gods, with vows and solemn pray'r;
And annual rites, and festivals, and games,
Shall be perform'd to their auspicious names.
Nor shalt thou want thy honours in my land:
For there thy faithful oracles shall stand,
Preserv'd in shrines: and ev'ry sacred lay,
Which, by thy mouth, Apollo shall convey—
All shall be treasur'd by a chosen train
Of holy priests, and ever shall remain.
But, oh! commit not thy prophetic mind
To flitting leaves, the sport of ev'ry wind,
Lest they disperse in air our empty fate:
Write not; but, what the pow'rs ordain, relate."
 Struggling in vain, impatient of her load,
And lab'ring underneath the pond'rous god,
The more she strove to shake him from her breast,
With more and far superior force he press'd;
Commands his entrance, and, without control,
Usurps her organs, and inspires her soul.
Now, with a furious blast, the hundred doors
Ope of themselves; a rushing whirlwind roars
Within the cave, and Sibyl's voice restores:
 "Escap'd the dangers of the wat'ry reign,
Yet more and greater ills by land remain.
The coast, so long desir'd, (nor doubt th' event)
Thy troops shall reach, but, having reach'd, repent.
Wars, horrid wars, I view—a field of blood,
And Tiber rolling with a purple flood.
Simois nor Xanthus shall be wanting there:
A new Achilles shall in arms appear,

And he, too, goddess-born. Fierce Juno's hate,
Added to hostile force, shall urge thy fate.
To what strange nations shalt not thou resort,
Driv'n to solicit aid at ev'ry court!
The cause the same which Ilium once oppress'd—
A foreign mistress, and a foreign guest.
But thou, secure of soul, unbent with woes,
The more thy fortune frowns, the more oppose.
The dawnings of thy safety shall be shown
From (whence thou least shalt hope) a Grecian town."
 Thus, from the dark recess, the Sibyl spoke;
And the resisting air the thunder broke;
The cave rebellow'd, and the temple shook.
Th' ambiguous god, who rul'd her lab'ring breast,
In these mysterious words his mind express'd;
Some truths reveal'd, in terms involv'd the rest.
At length her fury fell; her foaming ceas'd,
And, ebbing in her soul, the god decreas'd.
 Then thus the chief: "No terror to my view,
No frightful face of danger, can be new.
Inur'd to suffer, and resolv'd to dare,
The Fates, without my pow'r, shall be without my care.
This let me crave—since near your grove the road
To hell lies open, and the dark abode,
Which Acheron surrounds, th' innavigable flood—
Conduct me through the regions void of light,
And lead me longing to my father's sight.
For him, a thousand dangers I have sought,
And, rushing where the thickest Grecians fought,
Safe on my back the sacred burden brought.
He, for my sake, the raging ocean try'd,
And wrath of heav'n, (my still auspicious guide)
And bore, beyond the strength decrepit age supply'd.
Oft, since he breath'd his last, in dead of night,
His rev'rend image stood before my sight;
Enjoin'd to seek, below, his holy shade—
Conducted there by your unerring aid.

But you, if pious minds by pray'rs are won,
Oblige the father, and protect the son.
Yours is the pow'r; nor Proserpine in vain
Has made you priestess of her nightly reign.
If Orpheus, arm'd with his enchanting lyre,
The ruthless king with pity could inspire,
And from the shades below redeem his wife;
If Pollux, off'ring his alternate life,
Could free his brother, and can daily go
By turns aloft, by turns descend below;—
Why name I Theseus, or his greater friend,
Who trod the downward path, and upward could ascend?—
Not less than theirs, from Jove my lineage came;
My mother greater, my descent the same."
So pray'd the Trojan prince, and, while he pray'd,
His hand upon the holy altar laid.

Then thus reply'd the prophetess divine:
"O goddess-born, of great Anchises' line!
The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way:
But, to return, and view the cheerful skies—
In this the task and mighty labour lies.
To few great Jupiter imparts this grace,
And those of shining worth, and heav'nly race.
Betwixt those regions and our upper light,
Deep forests and impenetrable night
Possess the middle space: th' infernal bounds
Cocytus, with his sable waves, surrounds.
But, if so dire a love your soul invades,
As twice below to view the trembling shades;
If you so hard a toil will undertake,
As twice to pass th' innavigable lake;
Receive my counsel. In the neighb'ring grove
There stands a tree: the queen of Stygian Jove
Claims it her own: thick woods and gloomy night
Conceal the happy plant from human sight.
One bough it bears; but (wondrous to behold)

The ductile rind and leaves of radiant gold.
This from the vulgar branches must be torn,
And to fair Proserpine the present born,
Ere leave be giv'n to tempt the nether skies.
The first thus rent, a second will arise;
And the same metal the same room supplies.
Look round the wood, with lifted eyes, to see
The lurking gold upon the fatal tree:
Then rend it off, as holy rites command.
The willing metal will obey thy hand,
Following with ease, if, favour'd by thy fate,
Thou art foredoom'd to view the Stygian state:
If not, no labour can the tree constrain;
And strength of stubborn arms, and steel, are vain.
Besides, you know not, while you here attend,
Th' unworthy fate of your unhappy friend:
Breathless he lies, and his unbury'd ghost,
Depriv'd of fun'ral rites, pollutes your host.
Pay first his pious dues: and, for the dead,
Two sable sheep around his hearse be led;
Then, living turfs upon his body lay:
This done, securely take the destin'd way,
To find the regions destitute of day."
She said, and held her peace.—Aeneas went
Sad from the cave, and full of discontent,
Unknowing whom the sacred Sibyl meant.
Achates, the companion of his breast,
Goes grieving by his side, with equal cares oppress'd.
Walking, they talk'd, and fruitlessly divin'd,
What friend the priestess by those words design'd.
But soon they found an object to deplore:
Misenus lay extended on the shore—
Son to the god of winds:—none so renown'd,
The warrior trumpet in the field to sound,
With breathing brass to kindle fierce alarms,
And rouse to dare their fate in honourable arms.
He serv'd great Hector, and was ever near,

Not with his trumpet only, but his spear.
But, by Pelides' arm when Hector fell,
He chose Aeneas; and he chose as well.
Swoln with applause, and aiming still at more,
He now provokes the sea-gods from the shore.
With envy, Triton heard the martial sound,
And the bold champion, for his challenge, drown'd;
Then cast his mangled carcass on the strand.—
The gazing crowd around the body stand.
All weep; but most Aeneas mourns his fate;
And hastens to perform the fun'ral state.

In altar-wise, a stately pile they rear;
The basis broad below, and top advanc'd in air.
An ancient wood, fit for the work design'd,
(The shady covert of the savage kind)
The Trojans found: the sounding axe is ply'd:
Firs, pines, and pitch-trees, and the tow'ring pride
Of forest ashes, feel the fatal stroke;
And piercing wedges cleave the stubborn oak.
Huge trunks of trees, fell'd from the steepy crown
Of the bare mountains, roll with ruin down.
Arm'd like the rest the Trojan prince appears,
And, by his pious labour, urges theirs.

Thus while he wrought, revolving in his mind
The ways to compass what his wish design'd,
He cast his eyes upon the gloomy grove,
And then with vows implor'd the queen of love:
"O! may thy pow'r, propitious still to me,
Conduct my steps to find the fatal tree,
In this deep forest; since the Sibyl's breath
Foretold, alas! too true, Misenus' death."

Scarce had he said, when, full before his sight,
Two doves, descending from their airy flight,
Secure upon the grassy plain alight.
He knew his mother's birds; and thus he pray'd:
"Be you my guides, with your auspicious aid;
And lead my footsteps, till the branch be found,

Whose glitt'ring shadow gilds the sacred ground.
And thou, great parent! with celestial care,
In this distress, be present to my pray'r."
Thus having said, he stopp'd, with watchful sight
Observing still the motions of their flight,
What course they took, what happy signs they shew.
They fed, and, flutt'ring, by degrees withdrew
Still further from the place; but still in view:
Hopping and flying thus, they led him on
To the slow lake; whose baleful stench to shun,
They wing'd their flight aloft, then, stooping low,
Perch'd on the double tree, that bears the golden bough.
Through the green leaves the glitt'ring shadows glow,
As, on the sacred oak, the wint'ry mistletoe,
Where the proud mother views her precious brood,
And happier branches, which she never sow'd.
Such was the glitt'ring; such the ruddy rind,
And dancing leaves, that wanton'd in the wind.
He seiz'd the shining bough with gripping hold,
And rent away, with ease, the ling'ring gold,
Then to the Sibyl's palace bore the prize.
Meantime, the Trojan troops, with weeping eyes,
To dead Misenus pay his obsequies.
First, from the ground, a lofty pile they rear,
Of pitch-trees, oaks, and pines, and unctuous fir:
The fabric's front with cypress twigs they strew,
And stick the sides with boughs of baleful yew.
The topmost part his glitt'ring arms adorn;
Warm waters, then, in brazen caldrons borne,
Are pour'd to wash his body, joint by joint;
And fragrant oils the stiffen'd limbs anoint.
With groans and cries Misenus they deplore:
Then on a bier, with purple cover'd o'er,
The breathless body, thus bewail'd, they lay,
And fire the pile, their faces turn'd away:
(Such rev'rent rites their fathers us'd to pay.)
Pure oil and incense on the fire they throw,

And fat of victims, which his friends bestow.
These gifts the greedy flames to dust devour;
Then, on the living coals, red wine they pour;
And, last, the reliques by themselves dispose,
Which in a brazen urn the priests inclose.
Old Corynaeus compass'd thrice the crew,
And dipp'd an olive-branch in holy dew;
Which thrice he sprinkled round; and thrice aloud
Invok'd the dead, and then dismiss'd the crowd.
But good Aeneas order'd on the shore
A stately tomb, whose top a trumpet bore,
A soldier's fauchion, and a seaman's oar.
Thus was his friend interr'd: and deathless fame
Still to the lofty cape consigns his name.
These rites perform'd, the prince, without delay,
Hastes, to the nether world, his destin'd way.
Deep was the cave; and, downward as it went
From the wide mouth, a rocky rough descent;
And here th' access a gloomy grove defends;
And there th' innavigable lake extends,
O'er whose unhappy waters, void of light,
No bird presumes to steer his airy flight;
Such deadly stenches from the depth arise,
And steaming sulphur, that infects the skies.
From hence the Grecian bards their legends make,
And give the name Avernus to the lake.
Four sable bullocks, in the yoke untaught,
For sacrifice the pious hero brought.
The priestess pours the wine betwixt their horns;
Then cuts the curling hair; that first oblation burns,
Invoking Hecat hither to repair—
A pow'rful name in hell and upper air.
The sacred priests, with ready knives, bereave
The beasts of life, and in full bowls receive
The streaming blood: a lamb to Hell and Night
(The sable wool without a streak of white)
Aeneas offers; and, by Fate's decree,

A barren heifer, Proserpine, to thee.
With holocausts he Pluto's altar fills:
Sev'n brawny bulls with his own hand he kills:
Then, on the broiling entrails, oil he pours;
Which, ointed thus, the raging flame devours.
Late the nocturnal sacrifice begun,
Nor ended, till the next returning sun.
Then earth began to bellow, trees to dance,
And howling dogs in glimm'ring light advance,
Ere Hecat came.—"Far hence be souls profane!"
The Sibyl cry'd—"and from the grove abstain!
Now, Trojan, take the way thy fates afford:
Assume thy courage, and unsheath thy sword."
She said, and pass'd along the gloomy space:
The prince pursu'd her steps with equal pace.
Ye realms, yet unreveal'd to human sight!
Ye gods, who rule the regions of the night!
Ye gliding ghosts! permit me to relate
The mystic wonders of your silent state.
Obscure they went through dreary shades, that led
Along the waste dominions of the dead.
Thus wander travellers in woods by night,
By the moon's doubtful and malignant light,
When Jove in dusky clouds involves the skies,
And the faint crescent shoots by fits before their eyes.
Just in the gate, and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful Cares and sullen Sorrows dwell,
And pale Diseases, and repining Age,
Want, Fear, and Famine's unresisted rage;
Here Toils, and Death, and Death's half-brother, Sleep,
(Forms terrible to view) their sentry keep;
With anxious Pleasures of a guilty mind,
Deep Frauds before, and open Force behind;
The Furies' iron beds; and Strife, that shakes
Her hissing tresses, and unfolds her snakes.
Full in the midst of this infernal road,
An elm displays her dusky arms abroad:

The god of sleep there hides his heavy head,
And empty dreams on ev'ry leaf are spread.
Of various forms unnumber'd spectres more,
Centaurs, and double shapes, besiege the door.
Before the passage, horrid Hydra stands,
And Briareus with all his hundred hands;
Gorgons, Geryon with his triple frame;
And vain Chimaera vomits empty flame.
The chief unsheath'd his shining steel, prepar'd,
Though seiz'd with sudden fear, to force the guard,
Off'ring his brandish'd weapon at their face;
Had not the Sibyl stopp'd his eager pace,
And told him what those empty phantoms were—
Forms without bodies, and impassive air.

Hence to deep Acheron they take their way,
Whose troubled eddies, thick with ooze and clay,
Are whirl'd aloft, and in Cocytus lost:
There Charon stands, who rules the dreary coast—
A sordid god: down from his hoary chin
A length of beard descends, uncomb'd, unclean.
His eyes, like hollow furnaces on fire;
A girdle, foul with grease, binds his obscene attire.
He spreads his canvas; with his pole he steers;
The freights of flitting ghosts in his thin bottom bears.
He look'd in years; yet, in his years, were seen
A youthful vigour, and autumnal green.

An airy crowd came rushing where he stood,
Which fill'd the margin of the fatal flood—
Husbands and wives, boys and unmarry'd maids,
And mighty heroes' more majestic shades,
And youths, intomb'd before their fathers' eyes,
With hollow groans, and shrieks, and feeble cries.
Thick as the leaves in autumn strow the woods,
Or fowls, by winter forc'd, forsake the floods,
And wing their hasty flight to happier lands—
Such, and so thick, the shiv'ring army stands,
And press for passage with extended hands.

Now these, now those, the surly boatman bore:
The rest he drove to distance from the shore.
The hero, who beheld, with wond'ring eyes,
The tumult mix'd with shrieks, laments, and cries,
Ask'd of his guide, what the rude concourse meant?
Why to the shore the thronging people bent?
What forms of law among the ghosts were us'd?
Why some were ferry'd o'er, and some refus'd?
"Son of Anchises! offspring of the gods!"
The Sibyl said, "you see the Stygian floods,
The sacred stream, which heav'n's imperial state
Attests in oaths, and fears to violate.
The ghosts rejected are th' unhappy crew
Depriv'd of sepulchres and fun'ral due:
The boatman, Charon: those, the bury'd host,
He ferries over to the further coast;
Nor dares his transport vessel cross the waves
With such, whose bones are not compos'd in graves.
A hundred years they wander on the shore;
At length, their penance done, are wafted o'er."
The Trojan chief his forward pace repress'd,
Revolving anxious thoughts within his breast.
He saw his friends, who, whelm'd beneath the waves,
Their fun'ral honours claim'd, and ask'd their quiet graves.
The lost Leucaspis in the crowd he knew,
And the brave leader of the Lycian crew,
Whom, on the Tyrrhene seas, the tempests met;
The sailors master'd, and the ship o'erset.
Amidst the spirits, Palinurus press'd,
Yet fresh from life, a new-admitted guest,
Who, while he steering view'd the stars, and bore
His course from Afric to the Latian shore,
Fell headlong down. The Trojan fix'd his view,
And scarcely through the gloom the sullen shadow knew.
Then thus the prince: "What envious pow'r, O friend!
Brought your lov'd life to this disastrous end?
For Phoebus, ever true in all he said,

Has, in your fate alone, my faith betray'd.
The god foretold, you should not die, before
You reach'd, secure from seas, th' Italian shore.
Is this th' unerring pow'r?"—The ghost reply'd:
"Nor Phoebus flatter'd, nor his answers lied;
Nor envious gods have sent me to the deep:
But, while the stars and course of heav'n I keep,
My weary'd eyes were seiz'd with fatal sleep.
I fell; and, with my weight, the helm constrain'd
Was drawn along, which yet my grip retain'd.
Now by the winds and raging waves I swear,
Your safety, more than mine, was then my care,
Lest, of the guide bereft, the rudder lost,
Your ship should run against the rocky coast.
Three blust'ring nights, borne by the southern blast,
I floated, and discover'd land at last:
High on a mounting wave my head I bore,
Forcing my strength, and gath'ring to the shore.
Panting, but past the danger, now I seiz'd
The craggy cliffs, and my tir'd members eas'd.
While, cumber'd with my dripping clothes, I lay,
The cruel nation, covetous of prey,
Stain'd with my blood th' unhospitable coast:
And now, by winds and waves, my lifeless limbs are toss'd:
Which, O! avert, by yon etherial light,
Which I have lost for this eternal night:
Or, if by dearer ties you may be won,
By your dead sire, and by your living son,
Redeem from this reproach my wand'ring ghost.—
Or with your navy seek the Velin coast,
And in a peaceful grave my corpse compose;
Or, if a nearer way your mother shows,
(Without whose aid, you durst not undertake
This frightful passage o'er the Stygian lake)
Lend to this wretch your hand, and waft him o'er
To the sweet banks of yon forbidden shore."
Scarce had he said; the prophetess began:

"What hopes delude thee, miserable man?
Think'st thou, thus unintomb'd, to cross the floods,
To view the Furies and infernal gods,
And visit, without leave, the dark abodes?
Attend the term of long revolving years:
Fate, and the dooming gods, are deaf to pray'rs.
This comfort of thy dire misfortune take—
The wrath of heav'n, inflicted for thy sake,
With vengeance shall pursue th' inhuman coast,
Till they propitiate thy offended ghost,
And raise a tomb, with vows and solemn pray'r;
And Palinurus' name the place shall bear."
This calm'd his cares—sooth'd with his future fame,
And pleas'd to hear his propagated name.

Now nearer to the Stygian lake they draw:
Whom, from the shore, the surly boatman saw;
Observ'd their passage through the shady wood,
And mark'd their near approaches to the flood:
Then thus he call'd aloud, inflam'd with wrath:
"Mortal, whate'er, who this forbidden path
In arms presum'st to tread! I charge thee, stand,
And tell thy name, and bus'ness in the land.
Know, this the realm of night—the Stygian shore:
My boat conveys no living bodies o'er:
Nor was I pleas'd great Theseus once to bear,
(Who forc'd a passage with his pointed spear)
Nor strong Alcides—men of mighty fame;
And from th' immortal gods their lineage came.
In fetters one the barking porter tied,
And took him trembling from his sovereign's side:
Two sought by force to seize his beauteous bride."

To whom the Sibyl thus: "Compose thy mind:
Nor frauds are here contriv'd, nor force design'd.
Still may the dog the wand'ring troops constrain
Of airy ghosts, and vex the guilty train;
And with her grisly lord his lovely queen remain.
The Trojan chief, whose lineage is from Jove,

Much fam'd for arms, and more for filial love,
Is sent to seek his sire in your Elysian grove.
If neither piety, nor heav'n's command,
Can gain his passage to the Stygian strand,
This fatal present shall prevail, at least"—
Then shew'd the shining bough, conceal'd within her vest.
No more was needful: for the gloomy god
Stood mute with awe, to see the golden rod;
Admir'd the destin'd off'ring to his queen—
A venerable gift, so rarely seen.
His fury thus appeas'd, he puts to land:
The ghosts forsake their seats, at his command:
He clears the deck, receives the mighty freight:
The leaky vessel groans beneath the weight.
Slowly she sails, and scarcely stems the tides:
The pressing water pours within her sides.
His passengers at length are wafted o'er,
Expos'd, in muddy weeds, upon the miry shore.
No sooner landed, in his den they found
The triple porter of the Stygian sound,
Grim Cerberus, who soon began to rear
His crested snakes, and arm'd his bristling hair.
The prudent Sibyl had before prepar'd
A sop, in honey steep'd, to charm the guard;
Which, mix'd with pow'rful drugs, she cast before
His greedy grinning jaws, just op'd to roar.
With three enormous mouths he gapes; and straight,
With hunger press'd, devours the pleasing bait.
Long draughts of sleep his monstrous limbs enslave;
He reels, and, falling, fills the spacious cave.
The keeper charm'd, the chief without delay
Pass'd on, and took th' irremeable way.
Before the gates, the cries of babes new-born,
Whom Fate had from their tender mothers torn,
Assault his ears: then those, whom form of laws
Condemn'd to die, when traitors judg'd their cause.
Nor want they lots, nor judges to review

The wrongful sentence, and award a new.
Minos, the strict inquisitor, appears;
And lives and crimes, with his assessors, hears.
Round, in his urn, the blended balls he rolls,
Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.
The next, in place and punishment, are they
Who prodigally threw their souls away—
Fools, who, repining at their wretched state,
And loathing anxious life, suborn'd their fate.
With late repentance, now they would retrieve
The bodies they forsook, and wish to live;
Their pains and poverty desire to bear,
To view the light of heav'n, and breathe the vital air:
But Fate forbids; the Stygian floods oppose,
And, with nine circling streams, the captive souls inclose.
Not far from thence, the Mournful Fields appear,
So call'd from lovers that inhabit there.
The souls, whom that unhappy flame invades,
In secret solitude and myrtle shades
Make endless moans, and, pining with desire,
Lament too late their unextinguish'd fire.
Here Procris, Eriphyle here he found
Baring her breast, yet bleeding with the wound
Made by her son. He saw Pasiphae there,
With Phaedra's ghost, a foul incestuous pair.
There Laodamia, with Evadne, moves—
Unhappy both, but loyal in their loves:
Caeneus, a woman once, and once a man,
But ending in the sex she first began.
Not far from these Phoenician Dido stood,
Fresh from her wound, her bosom bath'd in blood;
Whom when the Trojan hero hardly knew,
Obscure in shades, and with a doubtful view,
(Doubtful as he who sees, through dusky night,
Or thinks he sees, the moon's uncertain light)
With tears he first approach'd the sullen shade;
And, as his love inspir'd him, thus he said:

"Unhappy queen! then is the common breath
Of rumour true, in your reported death,
And I, alas! the cause?—By heav'n, I vow,
And all the pow'rs that rule the realms below,
Unwilling I forsook your friendly state,
Commanded by the gods, and forc'd by Fate—
Those gods, that Fate, whose unresisted might
Have sent me to these regions void of light,
Through the vast empire of eternal night.
Nor dar'd I to presume, that, press'd with grief,
My flight should urge you to this dire relief.
Stay, stay your steps, and listen to my vows!
'Tis the last interview that Fate allows!"

In vain he thus attempts her mind to move
With tears and pray'rs, and late-repenting love.
Disdainfully she look'd; then turning round,
But fix'd her eyes unmov'd upon the ground,
And, what he says and swears, regards no more,
Than the deaf rocks, when the loud billows roar;
But, whirl'd away, to shun his hateful sight,
Hid in the forest, and the shades of night;
Then sought Sichaeus through the shady grove,
Who answer'd all her cares, and equall'd all her love.

Some pious tears the pitying hero paid,
And follow'd with his eyes the flitting shade,
Then took the forward way by Fate ordain'd,
And, with his guide, the further fields attain'd,
Where, sever'd from the rest, the warrior souls remain'd.
Tydeus he met, with Meleager's race,
The pride of armies, and the soldiers' grace;
And pale Adrastus with his ghastly face.
Of Trojan chiefs he view'd a num'rous train,
All much lamented, all in battle slain—
Glaucus and Medon, high above the rest;
Antenor's sons, and Ceres' sacred priest,
And proud Idaeus, Priam's charioteer,
Who shakes his empty reins, and aims his airy spear.

The gladsome ghosts, in circling troops, attend,
And with unweary'd eyes behold their friend;
Delight to hover near, and long to know
What bus'ness brought him to the realms below.
 But Argive chiefs, and Agamemnon's train,
When his refulgent arms flash'd through the shady plain,
Fled from his well-known face, with wonted fear,
As when his thund'ring sword and pointed spear
Drove headlong to their ships, and glean'd the routed rear.
They rais'd a feeble cry, with trembling notes:
But the weak voice deceiv'd their gasping throats.
Here Priam's son, Deiphobus, he found,
Whose face and limbs were one continu'd wound.
Dishonest, with lopp'd arms, the youth appears,
Spoil'd of his nose, and shorten'd of his ears.
He scarcely knew him, striving to disown
His blotted form, and blushing to be known;
And therefore first began: "O Teucer's race!
Who durst thy faultless figure thus deface?
What heart could wish, what hand inflict, this dire disgrace?
'Twas fam'd, that, in our last and fatal night,
Your single prowess long sustain'd the fight,
Till, tir'd, not forc'd, a glorious fate you chose,
And fell upon a heap of slaughter'd foes.
But, in remembrance of so brave a deed,
A tomb and fun'ral honours I decreed;
Thrice call'd your manès on the Trojan plains:
The place your armour and your name retains.
Your body too I sought, and, had I found,
Design'd for burial in your native ground."
 The ghost reply'd: "Your piety has paid
All needful rites, to rest my wand'ring shade:
But cruel Fate, and my more cruel wife,
To Grecian swords betray'd my sleeping life.
These are the monuments of Helen's love—
The shame I bear below, the marks I bore above.
You know in what deluding joys we past

The night, that was by heav'n decreed our last.
For, when the fatal horse, descending down,
Pregnant with arms, o'erwhelm'd th' unhappy town,
She feign'd nocturnal orgies; left my bed,
And, mix'd with Trojan dames, the dances led,
Then, waving high her torch, the signal made,
Which rous'd the Grecians from their ambuscade.
With watching overworn, with cares oppress'd,
Unhappy I had laid me down to rest;
And heavy sleep my weary limbs possess'd.
Meantime my worthy wife our arms mislaid,
And, from beneath my head, my sword convey'd;
The door unlatch'd, and, with repeated calls,
Invites her former lord within my walls.
Thus in her crime her confidence she plac'd,
And with new treasons would redeem the past.
What need I more? Into the room they ran,
And meanly murder'd a defenceless man.
Ulysses, basely born, first led the way.—
Avenging pow'rs! with justice if I pray,
That fortune be their own another day!
But answer you; and in your turn relate,
What brought you, living, to the Stygian state.
Driv'n by the winds and errors of the sea?
Or did you heav'n's superior doom obey?
Or tell, what other chance conducts your way,
To view, with mortal eyes, our dark retreats,
Tumults and torments of th' infernal seats."

While thus, in talk, the flying hours they pass,
The sun had finish'd more than half his race:
And they, perhaps, in words and tears had spent
The little time of stay which heav'n had lent:
But thus the Sibyl chides their long delay:
"Night rushes down, and headlong drives the day:
'Tis here, in diff'rent paths, the way divides:
The right to Pluto's golden palace guides:
The left to that unhappy region tends,

Which to the depth of Tartarus descends—
The seat of night profound, and punish'd fiends."
 Then thus Deiphobus: "O sacred maid!
Forbear to chide; and be your will obey'd.
Lo! to the secret shadows I retire,
To pay my penance, till my years expire.
Proceed, auspicious prince, with glory crown'd,
And born to better fates than I have found."
He said; and, while he said, his steps he turn'd
To secret shadows, and in silence mourn'd.
 The hero, looking on the left, espy'd
A lofty tow'r, and strong on ev'ry side
With triple walls, which Phlegethon surrounds,
Whose fiery flood the burning empire bounds:
And, press'd betwixt the rocks, the bellowing noise resounds.
Wide is the fronting gate, and, rais'd on high
With adamantine columns, threats the sky.
Vain is the force of man, and heav'n's as vain,
To crush the pillars which the pile sustain.
Sublime on these a tow'r of steel is rear'd;
And dire Tisiphone there keeps the ward,
Girt in her sanguine gown, by night and day,
Observant of the souls that pass the downward way.
From hence are heard the groans of ghosts, the pains
Of sounding lashes, and of dragging chains.
 The Trojan stood astonish'd at their cries,
And ask'd his guide, from whence those yells arise;
And what the crimes, and what the tortures were,
And loud laments that rent the liquid air.
 She thus reply'd: "The chaste and holy race
Are all forbidden this polluted place.
But Hecat, when she gave to rule the woods,
Then led me trembling through these dire abodes,
And taught the tortures of th' avenging gods.
These are the realms of unrelenting Fate;
And awful Rhadamanthus rules the state.
He hears and judges each committed crime;

Inquires into the manner, place, and time.
The conscious wretch must all his acts reveal,
(Loth to confess, unable to conceal)
From the first moment of his vital breath,
To his last hour of unrepenting death.
Straight, o'er the guilty ghost, the Fury shakes
The sounding whip, and brandishes her snakes,
And the pale sinner, with her sisters, takes.
Then, of itself, unfolds th' eternal door:
With dreadful sounds the brazen hinges roar.
You see, before the gate, what stalking ghost
Commands the guard, what sentries keep the post.
More formidable Hydra stands within,
Whose jaws with iron teeth severely grin.
The gaping gulf low to the centre lies,
And twice as deep, as earth is distant from the skies.
The rivals of the gods, the Titan race,
Here, sing'd with lightning, roll within th' unfathom'd space.
Here lie th' Aloean twins, (I saw them both)
Enormous bodies of gigantic growth,
Who dar'd in fight the Thund'rer to defy,
Affect his heav'n, and force him from the sky.
Salmoneus, suff'ring cruel pains, I found,
For emulating Jove with rattling sound
Of mimic thunder, and the glitt'ring blaze
Of pointed lightnings, and their forky rays.
Through Elis, and the Grecian towns, he flew:
Th' audacious wretch four fiery coursers drew:
He wav'd a torch aloft, and, madly vain,
Sought godlike worship from a servile train:
Ambitious fool! with horny hoofs to pass
O'er hollow arches of resounding brass,
To rival thunder in its rapid course,
And imitate inimitable force!
But he, the king of heav'n, obscure on high,
Bar'd his red arm, and, launching from the sky

His writhen bolt, not shaking empty smoke,
Down to the deep abyss the flaming felon struck.
There Tityus was to see, who took his birth
From heav'n, his nursing from the foodful earth.
Here his gigantic limbs, with large embrace,
Infold nine acres of infernal space.
A rav'nous vulture, in his open'd side,
Her crooked beak and cruel talons try'd;
Still for the growing liver digg'd his breast:
The growing liver still supply'd the feast;
Still are his entrails fruitful to their pains:
Th' immortal hunger lasts, th' immortal food remains.
Ixion and Pirithous I could name,
And more Thessalian chiefs of mighty fame.
High o'er their heads a mould'ring rock is plac'd,
That promises a fall, and shakes at ev'ry blast.
They lie below, on golden beds display'd;
And genial feasts with regal pomp are made.
The queen of Furies by their sides is set,
And snatches from their mouths th' untasted meat,
Which if they touch, her hissing snakes she rears,
Tossing her torch, and thund'ring in their ears.
Then they, who brothers' better claim disown,
Expel their parents, and usurp the throne;
Defraud their clients, and, to lucre sold,
Sit brooding on unprofitable gold—
Who dare not give, and ev'n refuse to lend,
To their poor kindred, or a wanting friend—
Vast is the throng of these; nor less the train
Of lustful youths, for foul adult'ry slain—
Hosts of deserters, who their honour sold,
And basely broke their faith for bribes of gold.
All these within the dungeon's depth remain,
Despairing pardon, and expecting pain.
Ask not what pains; nor further seek to know
Their process, or the forms of law below.

Some roll a weighty stone; some, laid along,
And bound with burning wires, on spokes of wheels are hung.
Unhappy Theseus, doom'd for ever there,
Is fix'd by Fate on his eternal chair:
And wretched Phlegyas warns the world with cries,
(Could warning make the world more just or wise)
'Learn righteousness, and dread th' avenging deities.'
To tyrants others have their country sold,
Imposing foreign lords, for foreign gold:
Some have old laws repeal'd, new statutes made,
Not as the people pleas'd, but as they paid.
With incest some their daughters' bed profan'd.
All dar'd the worst of ills, and, what they dar'd, attain'd.
Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,
And throats of brass, inspir'd with iron lungs,
I could not half those horrid crimes repeat,
Nor half the punishments those crimes have met.
But let us haste our voyage to pursue:
The walls of Pluto's palace are in view,
The gate, and iron arch above:—it stands—
On anvils labour'd by the Cyclops' hands.
Before our further way the Fates allow,
Here must we fix on high the golden bough."
She said: and through the gloomy shades they pass'd,
And chose the middle path.—Arriv'd at last,
The prince, with living water, sprinkled o'er
His limbs and body; then approach'd the door,
Possess'd the porch, and on the front above
He fix'd the fatal bough, requir'd by Pluto's love.
These holy rites perform'd, they took their way,
Where long extended plains of pleasure lay.
The verdant fields with those of heav'n may vie,
With aether vested, and a purple sky—
The blissful seats of happy souls below:
Stars of their own, and their own suns, they know.
Their airy limbs in sports they exercise,

And, on the green, contend the wrestler's prize.
Some, in heroic verse, divinely sing:
Others in artful measures lead the ring.
The Thracian bard, surrounded by the rest,
There stands conspicuous in his flowing vest.
His flying fingers, and harmonious quill,
Strike sev'n distinguish'd notes, and sev'n at once they fill.
Here found they Teucer's old heroic race,
Born, better times and happier years to grace.
Assaracus and Ilus here enjoy
Perpetual fame, with him who founded Troy.
The chief beheld their chariots from afar,
Their shining arms, and coursers train'd to war.
Their lances fix'd in earth, their steeds around,
Free from their harness, graze the flow'ry ground.
The love of horses which they had, alive,
And care of chariots, after death survive.
Some cheerful souls were feasting on the plain;
Some did the song, and some the choir, maintain,
Beneath a laurel shade, where mighty Po
Mounts up to woods above, and hides his head below.
Here patriots live, who, for their country's good,
In fighting-fields, were prodigal of blood:
Priests of unblemish'd lives here make abode,
And poets worthy their inspiring god,
And searching wits, of more mechanic parts,
Who grac'd their age with new-invented arts;
Those who, to worth, their bounty did extend,
And those who knew that bounty to commend.
The heads of these with holy fillets bound;
And all their temples were with garlands crown'd.
To these the Sibyl thus her speech address'd,
And first to him surrounded by the rest—
(Tow'ring his height, and ample was his breast)
"Say, happy souls! divine Musaeus! say,
Where lives Anchises, and where lies our way
To find the hero, for whose only sake

We sought the dark abodes, and cross'd the bitter lake?"
To this the sacred poet thus reply'd:
"In no fix'd place the happy souls reside.
In groves we live, and lie on mossy beds,
By crystal streams, that murmur through the meads:
But pass yon easy hill, and thence descend;
The path conducts you to your journey's end."
This said, he led them up the mountain's brow,
And shews them all the shining fields below.
They wind the hill, and through the blissful meadows go.
But old Anchises, in a flow'ry vale,
Review'd his muster'd race, and took the tale—
Those happy spirits, which, ordain'd by Fate,
For future beings and new bodies wait—
With studious thought observ'd th' illustrious throng,
In Nature's order as they pass'd along—
Their names, their fates, their conduct, and their care,
In peaceful senates, and successful war.
He, when Aeneas on the plain appears,
Meets him with open arms, and falling tears.
"Welcome," he said, "the gods' undoubted race!
O long-expected! to my dear embrace!
Once more 'tis giv'n me to behold your face!
The love and pious duty which you pay,
Have pass'd the perils of so hard a way.
'Tis true, computing times, I now believ'd
The happy day approach'd; nor are my hopes deceiv'd.
What length of lands, what oceans have you pass'd,
What storms sustain'd, and on what shores been cast!
How have I fear'd your fate! but fear'd it most,
When love assail'd you on the Libyan coast."
To this, the filial duty thus replies:
"Your sacred ghost, before my sleeping eyes,
Appear'd, and often urg'd this painful enterprise.
After long tossing on the Tyrrhene sea,
My navy rides at anchor in the bay.
But reach your hand, O parent shade! nor shun

The dear embraces of your longing son!"
He said; and falling tears his face bedew:
Then thrice, around his neck, his arms he threw;
And thrice the flitting shadow slipp'd away,
Like winds, or empty dreams that fly the day.
Now, in a secret vale, the Trojan sees
A sep'rate grove, through which a gentle breeze
Plays with a passing breath, and whispers through the trees:
And, just before the confines of the wood,
The gliding Lethe leads her silent flood.
About the boughs an airy nation flew,
Thick as the humming bees, that hunt the golden dew
In summer's heat; on tops of lilies feed,
And creep within their bells, to suck the balmy seed:
The winged army roams the fields around;
The rivers and the rocks remurmur to the sound
Aeneas wond'ring stood, then ask'd the cause,
Which to the stream the crowding people draws.
Then thus the sire: "The souls, that throng the flood,
Are those, to whom, by Fate, are other bodies ow'd:
In Lethe's lake they long oblivion taste,
Of future life secure, forgetful of the past.
Long has my soul desir'd this time and place,
To set before your sight your glorious race,
That this presaging joy may fire your mind,
To seek the shores by destiny design'd."
"O father! can it be, that souls sublime
Return to visit our terrestrial clime,
And that the gen'rous mind, releas'd by death,
Can covet lazy limbs, and mortal breath?"
Anchises then, in order, thus begun
To clear those wonders to his godlike son:
"Know, first, that heav'n, and earth's compacted frame,
And flowing waters, and the starry flame,
And both the radiant lights, one common soul
Inspires and feeds—and animates the whole.
This active mind, infus'd through all the space,

Unites and mingles with the mighty mass.
Hence men and beasts the breath of life obtain,
And birds of air, and monsters of the main.
Th' etherial vigour is in all the same;
And ev'ry soul is fill'd with equal flame—
As much as earthy limbs, and gross allay
Of mortal members subject to decay,
Blunt not the beams of heav'n, and edge of day.
From this coarse mixture of terrestrial parts,
Desire and fear by turns possess their hearts,
And grief, and joy: nor can the groveling mind,
In the dark dungeon of the limbs confin'd,
Assert the native skies, or own its heav'nly kind:
Nor death itself can wholly wash their stains;
But long-contracted filth ev'n in the soul remains.
The reliques of invet'rate vice they wear;
And spots of sin obscene in ev'ry face appear.
For this are various penances enjoin'd;
And some are hung to bleach upon the wind,
Some plung'd in waters, others purg'd in fires,
Till all the dregs are drain'd, and all the rust expires.
All have their manès, and those manès bear:
The few, so cleans'd, to these abodes repair,
And breathe, in ample fields, the soft Elysian air.
Then are they happy, when by length of time
The scurf is worn away, of each committed crime;
No speck is left of their habitual stains;
But the pure aether of the soul remains.
But, when a thousand rolling years are past,
(So long their punishments and penance last)
Whole droves of minds are, by the driving god,
Compell'd to drink the deep Lethaean flood,
In large forgetful draughts to steep the cares
Of their past labours and their irksome years;
That, unrememb'ring of its former pain,
The soul may suffer mortal flesh again."
Thus having said, the father spirit leads

The priestess and his son through swarms of shades,
And takes a rising ground, from thence to see
The long procession of his progeny.
"Survey" (pursu'd the sire) "this airy throng,
As, offer'd to thy view, they pass along.
These are th' Italian names, which Fate will join
With ours, and graft upon the Trojan line
Observe the youth who first appears in sight,
And holds the nearest station to the light,
Already seems to snuff the vital air,
And leans just forward on a shining spear:
Silvius is he, thy last-begotten race,
But first in order sent to fill thy place—
An Alban name, but mix'd with Dardan blood:
Born in the covert of a shady wood,
Him fair Lavinia, thy surviving wife,
Shall breed in groves, to lead a solitary life.
In Alba he shall fix his royal seat,
And, born a king, a race of kings beget:
Then Procas, honour of the Trojan name,
Capys, and Numitor, of endless fame.
A second Silvius after these appears,
(Silvius Aeneas, for thy name he bears)
For arms and justice equally renown'd;
Who, late restor'd, in Alba shall be crown'd.
How great they look! how vig'rously they wield
Their weighty lances, and sustain the shield!
But they, who crown'd with oaken wreaths appear,
Shall Gabian walls and strong Fidenae rear;
Nomentum, Bola, with Pometia, found;
And raise Collatian tow'rs on rocky ground.
All these shall then be towns of mighty fame,
Though now they lie obscure, and lands without a name.
"See Romulus the great, born to restore
The crown that once his injur'd grandsire wore.
This prince a priestess of our blood shall bear;
And like his sire in arms he shall appear.

Two rising crests his royal head adorn:
Born from a god, himself to godhead born,
His sire already signs him for the skies,
And marks his seat amidst the deities.
Auspicious chief! thy race, in times to come,
Shall spread the conquests of imperial Rome—
Rome, whose ascending tow'rs shall heav'n invade,
Involving earth and ocean in her shade;
High as the Mother of the Gods in place,
And proud, like her, of an immortal race,
Then, when in pomp she makes the Phrygian round,
With golden turrets on her temples crown'd:
A hundred gods her sweeping train supply,
Her offspring all; and all command the sky.
"Now fix your sight, and stand intent, to see
Your Roman race, and Julian progeny.
There mighty Caesar waits his vital hour,
Impatient for the world, and grasps his promis'd pow'r.
But next behold the youth of form divine—
Caesar himself, exalted in his line—
Augustus, promis'd oft, and long foretold,
Sent to the realm that Saturn rul'd of old;
Born to restore a better age of gold.
Afric and India shall his pow'r obey;
He shall extend his propagated sway
Beyond the solar year, without the starry way,
Where Atlas turns the rolling heav'ns around,
And his broad shoulders with their lights are crown'd.
At his foreseen approach, already quake
The Caspian kingdoms and Maeotian lake.
Their seers behold the tempest from afar;
And threat'ning oracles denounce the war.
Nile hears him knocking at his sev'nfold gates,
And seeks his hidden spring, and fears his nephew's fates.
Nor Hercules more lands or labours knew,
Not though the brazen-footed hind he slew,
Freed Erymanthus from the foaming boar,

And dipp'd his arrows in Lernaean gore;
Nor Bacchus, turning from his Indian war,
By tigers drawn triumphant in his car,
From Nysa's top descending on the plains,
With curling vines around his purple reins.
And doubt we yet through dangers to pursue
The paths of honour, and a crown in view?
"But what's the man, who from afar appears?
His head with olive crown'd; his hand a censer bears.
His hoary beard and holy vestments bring
His lost idea back: I know the Roman king.
He shall to peaceful Rome new laws ordain,
Call'd from his mean abode, a sceptre to sustain.
Him Tullus next in dignity succeeds,
An active prince, and prone to martial deeds.
He shall his troops for fighting-fields prepare,
Disus'd to toils, and triumphs of the war.
By dint of sword, his crown he shall increase,
And scour his armour from the rust of peace.
Whom Ancus follows, with a fawning air,
But vain within, and proudly popular.
"Next view the Tarquin kings, th' avenging sword
Of Brutus, justly drawn, and Rome restor'd.
He first renews the rods and axe severe,
And gives the consuls royal robes to wear.
His sons, who seek the tyrant to sustain,
And long for arbitrary lords again,
With ignominy scourg'd in open sight,
He dooms to death deserv'd, asserting public right.
Unhappy man! to break the pious laws
Of nature, pleading in his children's cause!
Howe'er the doubtful fact is understood,
'Tis love of honour, and his country's good:
The consul, not the father, sheds the blood.
"Behold Torquatus the same track pursue;
And, next, the two devoted Decii view;
The Drusian line; Camillus, loaded home

With standards well redeem'd, and foreign foes o'ercome.
"The pair you see in equal armour shine,
Now, friends below, in close embraces join;
But, when they leave the shady realms of night,
And, cloth'd in bodies, breathe your upper light,
With mortal hate each other shall pursue:
What wars, what wounds, what slaughter, shall ensue!
From Alpine heights the father first descends;
His daughter's husband in the plain attends:
His daughter's husband arms his eastern friends.
Embrace again, my sons! be foes no more;
Nor stain your country with her children's gore!
And thou, the first, lay down thy lawless claim,
Thou, of my blood, who bear'st the Julian name!
"Another comes, who shall in triumph ride,
And to the Capitol his chariot guide,
From conquer'd Corinth, rich with Grecian spoils.
And yet another, fam'd for warlike toils,
On Argos shall impose the Roman laws,
And, on the Greeks, revenge the Trojan cause;
Shall drag in chains their Achillean race;
Shall vindicate his ancestors' disgrace,
And Pallas, for her violated place.
"Great Cato there, for gravity renown'd,
And conqu'ring Cossus goes with laurels crown'd.
Who can omit the Gracchi? who declare
The Scipios' worth, those thunderbolts of war,
The double bane of Carthage? Who can see,
Without esteem for virtuous poverty,
Severe Fabricius? or can cease t' admire
The ploughman consul in his coarse attire?
Tir'd as I am, my praise the Fabii claim;
And thou, great hero, greatest of thy name,
Ordain'd in war to save the sinking state,
And, by delays, to put a stop to fate!
"Let others better mould the running mass
Of metals, and inform the breathing brass,

And soften into flesh a marble face;
Plead better at the bar; describe the skies,
And when the stars descend, and when they rise:
But, Rome! 'tis thine alone, with awful sway,
To rule mankind, and make the world obey,
Disposing peace and war thy own majestic way;
To tame the proud, the fetter'd slave to free:
These are imperial arts, and worthy thee."
He paus'd—and, while with wond'ring eyes they view'd
The passing spirits, thus his speech renew'd:
"See great Marcellus! how, untir'd in toils,
He moves with manly grace, how rich with regal spoils!
He, when his country (threaten'd with alarms)
Requires his courage and his conqu'ring arms,
Shall more than once the Punic bands affright;
Shall kill the Gaulish king in single fight;
Then to the Capitol in triumph move:
And the third spoils shall grace Feretrian Jove."
Aeneas here beheld, of form divine,
A godlike youth in glitt'ring armour shine,
With great Marcellus keeping equal pace:
But gloomy were his eyes; dejected was his face.
He saw, and, wond'ring, ask'd his airy guide,
"What and of whence was he, who press'd the hero's side?
His son? or one of his illustrious name?
How like the former, and almost the same!
Observe the crowds that compass him around:
All gaze, and all admire, and raise a shouting sound:
But hov'ring mists around his brows are spread;
And night, with sable shades, involves his head."
"Seek not to know" (the ghost reply'd with tears)
"The sorrows of thy sons in future years.
This youth (the blissful vision of a day)
Shall just be shown on earth, and snatch'd away.
The gods too high had rais'd the Roman state,
Were but their gifts as permanent as great.
What groans of men shall fill the Martian Field!

How fierce a blaze his flaming pile shall yield!
What fun'ral pomp shall floating Tiber see,
When, rising from his bed, he views the sad solemnity!
No youth shall equal hopes of glory give,
No youth afford so great a cause to grieve:
The Trojan honour, and the Roman boast,
Admir'd when living, and ador'd when lost!
Mirror of ancient faith in early youth!
Undaunted worth, inviolable truth!
No foe, unpunish'd, in the fighting-field
Shall dare thee, foot to foot, with sword and shield,
Much less in arms oppose thy matchless force,
When thy sharp spurs shall urge thy foaming horse.
Ah! could'st thou break through Fate's severe decree,
A new Marcellus shall arise in thee!
Full canisters of fragrant lilies bring,
Mix'd with the purple roses of the spring:
Let me with fun'ral flow'rs his body strow:
This gift, which parents to their children owe,
This unavailing gift, at least, I may bestow!"
Thus having said, he led the hero round
The confines of the blest Elysian ground;
Which when Anchises to his son had shown,
And fir'd his mind to mount the promis'd throne,
He tells the future wars, ordain'd by Fate;
The strength and customs of the Latian state;
The prince, and people; and fore-arms his care
With rules, to push his fortune, or to bear.
Two gates the silent house of Sleep adorn;
Of polish'd iv'ry this, that of transparent horn:
True visions through transparent horn arise,
Through polish'd iv'ry pass deluding lies.
Of various things discoursing, as he pass'd,
Anchises hither bends his steps at last.
Then, through the gate of iv'ry, he dismiss'd
His valiant offspring, and divining guest.
Straight to the ships Aeneas took his way

Embark'd his men, and skimm'd along the sea,
Still coasting, till he gain'd Caieta's bay.
At length on oozy ground his galleys moor:
Their heads are turn'd to sea, their sterns to shore.

Nisus and Euryalus

NIGH where the foes their utmost guards advance,
To watch the gate was warlike Nisus' chance.
His father, Hyrtacus of noble blood;
His mother was a huntress of the wood,
And sent him to the wars. Well could he bear
His lance in fight, and dart the flying spear,
But better skill'd unerring shafts to send.
Beside him stood Euryalus, his friend—
Euryalus, than whom the Trojan host
No fairer face, or sweeter air, could boast.
Scarce had the down to shade his cheeks begun.
One was their care, and their delight was one.
One common hazard in the war they shar'd;
And now were both by choice upon the guard.
Then Nisus thus: "Or do the gods inspire
This warmth, or make we gods of our desire?
A gen'rous ardour boils within my breast,
Eager of action, enemy to rest:
This urges me to fight, and fires my mind,
To leave a memorable name behind.
Thou see'st the foe secure; how faintly shine
Their scatter'd fires: the most, in sleep supine
Along the ground, an easy conquest lie:
The wakeful few the fuming flagon ply:
All hush'd around. Now hear what I revolve—
A thought unripe—and scarcely yet resolve.
Our absent prince both camp and council mourn;
By message both would hasten his return:
If they confer, what I demand, on thee,

(For fame is recompense enough for me)
Methinks, beneath yon hill, I have espy'd
A way that safely will my passage guide."
Euryalus stood list'ning while he spoke;
With love of praise, and noble envy, struck;
Then to his ardent friend expos'd his mind:
"All this, alone, and leaving me behind!
Am I unworthy, Nisus, to be join'd?
Think'st thou, I can my share of glory yield,
Or send thee unassisted to the field?
Not so my father taught my childhood arms—
Born in a siege, and bred among alarms.
Nor is my youth unworthy of my friend,
Nor of the heav'n-born hero I attend.
The thing, call'd life, with ease I can disclaim,
And think it over-sold, to purchase fame."
Then Nisus thus: "Alas! thy tender years
Would minister new matter to my fears.
So may the gods, who view this friendly strife,
Restore me to thy lov'd embrace with life,
Condemn'd to pay my vows, (as sure I trust)
This thy request is cruel and unjust.
But if some chance—as many chances are,
And doubtful hazards, in the deeds of war—
If one should reach my head, there let it fall,
And spare thy life: I would not perish all.
Thy bloomy youth deserves a longer date:
Live thou to mourn thy love's unhappy fate,
To bear my mangled body from the foe,
Or buy it back, and fun'ral rites bestow.
Or, if hard Fortune shall those dues deny,
Thou canst at least an empty tomb supply.
O! let not me the widow's tears renew;
Nor let a mother's curse my name pursue—
Thy pious parent, who, for love of thee,
Forsook the coasts of friendly Sicily,
Her age committing to the seas and wind,

When ev'ry weary matron staid behind."
To this, Euryalus: "You plead in vain,
And but protract the cause you cannot gain.
No more delays! but haste!" With that, he wakes
The nodding watch: each to his office takes.
The guard reliev'd, the gen'rous couple went
To find the council at the royal tent.
All creatures else forgot their daily care,
And sleep, the common gift of nature, share;
Except the Trojan peers, who wakeful sate
In nightly council for th' endanger'd state.
They vote a message to their absent chief,
Shew their distress, and beg a swift relief.
Amid the camp a silent seat they chose,
Remote from clamour, and secure from foes.
On their left arms their ample shields they bear,
The right reclin'd upon the bending spear.
Now Nisus and his friend approach the guard,
And beg admission, eager to be heard—
Th' affair important, not to be deferr'd.
Ascanius bids them be conducted in,
Ord'ring the more experienc'd to begin.
Then Nisus thus: "Ye fathers, lend your ears;
Nor judge our bold attempt beyond our years.
The foe, securely drench'd in sleep and wine,
Neglect their watch; the fires but thinly shine;
And, where the smoke in cloudy vapours flies,
Cov'ring the plain, and curling to the skies,
Betwixt two paths which at the gate divide,
Close by the sea, a passage we have spy'd,
Which will our way to great Aeneas guide.
Expect each hour to see him safe again,
Loaded with spoils of foes in battle slain.
Snatch we the lucky minute while we may:
Nor can we be mistaken in the way;
For, hunting in the vale, we both have seen
The rising turrets, and the stream between;

And know the winding course, with ev'ry ford."
He ceas'd: and old Aletes took the word:
"Our country gods, in whom our trust we place,
Will yet from ruin save the Trojan race,
While we behold such dauntless worth appear
In dawning youth, and souls so void of fear."
Then into tears of joy the father broke;
Each in his longing arms by turns he took;
Panted and paus'd, and thus again he spoke:
"Ye brave young men, what equal gifts can we,
In recompense of such desert, decree?
The greatest, sure, and best you can receive,
The gods and your own conscious worth will give.
The rest our grateful gen'ral will bestow,
And young Ascanius, till his manhood, owe."
"And I, whose welfare in my father lies,"
Ascanius adds, "by the great deities,
By my dear country, by my household gods,
By hoary Vesta's rites and dark abodes,
Adjure you both—(on you my fortune stands;
That and my faith I plight into your hands)—
Make me but happy in his safe return,
Whose wanted presence I can only mourn;
Your common gift shall two large goblets be
Of silver, wrought with curious imagery,
And high emboss'd, which, when old Priam reign'd,
My conqu'ring sire at sack'd Arisba gain'd;
And, more, two tripods cast in antique mould,
With two great talents of the finest gold;
Beside a costly bowl, ingrav'd with art,
Which Dido gave, when first she gave her heart.
But, if in conquer'd Italy we reign,
When spoils by lot the victor shall obtain—
Thou saw'st the courser by proud Turnus press'd:
That, Nisus! and his arms, and nodding crest,
And shield, from chance exempt, shall be thy share;
Twelve lab'ring slaves, twelve handmaids young and fair,

All clad in rich attire, and train'd with care;
And, last, a Latian field with fruitful plains,
And a large portion of the king's domains.
But thou, whose years are more to mine ally'd,
No fate my vow'd affection shall divide
From thee, heroic youth! Be wholly mine:
Take full possession: all my soul is thine.
One faith, one fame, one fate, shall both attend:
My life's companion, and my bosom friend—
My peace shall be committed to thy care;
And, to thy conduct, my concerns in war."
Then thus the young Euryalus reply'd:
"Whatever fortune, good or bad, betide,
The same shall be my age, as now my youth:
No time shall find me wanting to my truth.
This only from your goodness let me gain—
(And, this ungranted, all rewards are vain)
Of Priam's royal race my mother came—
And, sure, the best that ever bore the name—
Whom neither Troy nor Sicily could hold
From me departing, but, o'erspent and old,
My fate she follow'd. Ignorant of this
(Whatever) danger, neither parting kiss
Nor pious blessing taken, her I leave,
And in this only act of all my life deceive.
By this right hand, and conscious Night, I swear,
My soul so sad a farewell could not bear.
Be you her comfort; fill my vacant place;
(Permit me to presume so great a grace)
Support her age, forsaken and distress'd.
That hope alone will fortify my breast
Against the worst of fortunes, and of fears."
He said. The mov'd assistants melt in tears.
Then thus Ascanius, wonder-struck to see
That image of his filial piety:
"So great beginnings, in so green an age,
Exact the faith which I again engage.

Thy mother all the dues shall justly claim,
Creusa had, and only want the name.
Whate'er event thy bold attempt shall have,
'Tis merit to have borne a son so brave.
Now by my head, a sacred oath, I swear,
(My father us'd it) what, returning here
Crown'd with success, I for thyself prepare,
That, if thou fail, shall thy lov'd mother share"
He said, and, weeping while he spoke the word,
From his broad belt he drew a shining sword,
Magnificent with gold. Lycaon made,
And in an iv'ry scabbard sheath'd the blade.
This was his gift. Great Mnestheus gave his friend
A lion's hide, his body to defend;
And good Aletes furnish'd him, beside,
With his own trusty helm, of temper try'd.
Thus arm'd they went. The noble Trojans wait
Their issuing forth, and follow to the gate
With pray'rs and vows. Above the rest appears
Ascanius, manly far beyond his years,
And messages committed to their care,
Which all in winds were lost, and flitting air.
The trenches first they pass'd; then took their way
Where their proud foes in pitch'd pavilions lay;
To many fatal, ere themselves were slain.
They found the careless host dispers'd upon the plain,
Who, gorg'd, and drunk with wine, supinely snore.
Unharness'd chariots stand along the shore:
Amidst the wheels and reins, the goblet by,
A medley of debauch and war, they lie.
Observing Nisus shew'd his friend the sight:
"Behold a conquest gain'd without a fight.
Occasion offers; and I stand prepar'd:
There lies our way: be thou upon the guard,
And look around, while I securely go,
And hew a passage through the sleeping foe."
Softly he spoke; then, striding, took his way,

With his drawn sword, where haughty Rhamnes lay;
His head rais'd high on tapestry beneath;
And, heaving, from his breast he drew his breath—
A king and prophet, by king Turnus lov'd:
But fate by prescience cannot be remov'd.
Him and his sleeping slaves he slew; then spies
Where Remus, with his rich retinue, lies.
His armour-bearer first, and next he kills
His charioteer, intrench'd betwixt the wheels
And his lov'd horses; last invades their lord;
Full on his neck he drives the fatal sword:
The gasping head flies off; a purple flood
Flows from the trunk, that welters in the blood,
Which, by the spurning heels dispers'd around,
The bed besprinkles, and bedews the ground.
Lamus the bold, and Lamyrus the strong,
He slew, and then Sarranus fair and young.
From dice and wine, the youth retir'd to rest,
And puff'd the fumy god from out his breast:
Ev'n then he dream'd of drink and lucky play—
More lucky, had it lasted till the day.
 The famish'd lion thus, with hunger bold,
O'erleaps the fences of the nightly fold,
And tears the peaceful flocks: with silent awe
Trembling they lie, and pant beneath his paw.
 Nor with less rage Euryalus employs
The wrathful sword, or fewer foes destroys:
But on th' ignoble crowd his fury flew:
He Fadus, Hebesus, and Rhoetus slew.
Oppress'd with heavy sleep, the former fall,
But Rhoetus wakeful, and observing all:
Behind a spacious jar he slink'd for fear:
The fatal iron found and reach'd him there;
For, as he rose, it pierc'd his naked side,
And, reeking, thence return'd in crimson dy'd.
The wound pours out a stream of wine and blood:
The purple soul comes floating in the flood.

Now, where Messapus quarter'd, they arrive.
The fires were fainting there, and just alive:
The warrior horses, tied in order, fed:
Nisus observ'd the discipline, and said:
"Our eager thirst of blood may both betray;
And see the scatter'd streaks of dawning day,
Foe to nocturnal thefts. No more, my friend:
Here let our glutted execution end.
A lane through slaughter'd bodies we have made."
The bold Euryalus, though loth, obey'd.
Of arms, and arras, and of plate, they find
A precious load; but these they leave behind.
Yet, fond of gaudy spoils, the boy would stay
To make the rich caparison his prey,
Which on the steed of conquer'd Rhamnes lay.
Nor did his eyes less longingly behold
The girdle-belt, with nails of burnish'd gold.
This present Caedicus the rich bestow'd
On Remulus, when friendship first they vow'd,
And, absent, join'd in hospitable ties:
He, dying, to his heir bequeath'd the prize;
Till, by the conqu'ring Ardean troops oppress'd,
He fell; and they the glorious gift possess'd.
These glitt'ring spoils (now made the victor's gain)
He to his body suits, but suits in vain.
Messapus' helm he finds among the rest,
And laces on, and wears the waving crest.
Proud of their conquest, prouder of their prey,
They leave the camp, and take the ready way.
But far they had not pass'd, before they spy'd
Three hundred horse, with Volscens for their guide.
The queen a legion to king Turnus sent:
But the swift horse the slower foot prevent,
And now, advancing, sought the leader's tent.
They saw the pair; for, through the doubtful shade,
His shining helm Euryalus betray'd,
On which the moon with full reflexion play'd.
" 'Tis not for nought," cry'd Volscens from the crowd,

"These men go there;" then rais'd his voice aloud:
"Stand! stand! why thus in arms? and whither bent?
From whence, to whom, and on what errand sent?"
Silent they scud away, and haste their flight
To neighb'ring woods, and trust themselves to night.
The speedy horse all passages belay,
And spur their smoking steeds to cross their way;
And watch each entrance of the winding wood.
Black was the forest: thick with beech it stood,
Horrid with fern, and intricate with thorn:
Few paths of human feet, or tracks of beasts, were worn.
The darkness of the shades, his heavy prey,
And fear, misled the younger from his way.
But Nisus hit the turns with happier haste,
And, thoughtless of his friend, the forest pass'd,
And Alban plains (from Alba's name so call'd)
Where king Latinus then his oxen stall'd;
Till, turning at the length, he stood his ground,
And miss'd his friend, and cast his eyes around.
"Ah wretch!" he cry'd—"where have I left behind
Th' unhappy youth? where shall I hope to find?
Or what way take?" Again he ventures back,
And treads the mazes of his former track
He winds the wood, and, list'ning, hears the noise
Of trampling coursers, and the riders' voice.
The sound approach'd; and suddenly he view'd
The foes inclosing, and his friend pursu'd,
Forelay'd and taken, while he strove in vain
The shelter of the friendly shades to gain.
What should he next attempt? what arms employ,
What fruitless force, to free the captive boy?
Or desp'rate should he rush, and lose his life,
With odds oppress'd, in such unequal strife?
Resolv'd at length, his pointed spear he shook;
And, casting on the moon a mournful look,
"Guardian of groves, and goddess of the night!
Fair queen!" he said, "direct my dart aright.
If e'er my pious father, for my sake,

Did grateful off'rings on thy altars make,
Or I increas'd them with my silvan toils,
And hung thy holy roofs with savage spoils,
Give me to scatter these." Then from his ear
He pois'd, and aim'd, and launch'd the trembling spear.
The deadly weapon, hissing from the grove,
Impetuous on the back of Sulmo drove;
Pierc'd his thin armour, drank his vital blood,
And in his body left the broken wood.
He staggers round: his eye-balls roll in death;
And with short sobs he gasps away his breath.
All stand amaz'd:—a second jav'lin flies
With equal strength, and quivers through the skies.
This through thy temples, Tagus, forc'd the way,
And in the brain-pan warmly bury'd lay.
Fierce Volscens foams with rage, and, gazing round,
Descry'd not him who gave the fatal wound,
Nor knew to fix revenge: "But thou," he cries,
"Shalt pay for both," and at the pris'ner flies
With his drawn sword. Then, struck with deep despair,
That cruel sight the lover could not bear;
But from his covert rush'd in open view,
And sent his voice before him, as he flew:
"Me! me!" he cry'd—"turn all your swords, alone,
On me—the fact confess'd, the fault my own.
He neither could nor durst, the guiltless youth—
Ye moon and stars, bear witness to the truth!
His only crime (if friendship can offend)
Is too much love to his unhappy friend."
Too late he speaks:—the sword, which fury guides,
Driv'n with full force, had pierc'd his tender sides.
Down fell the beauteous youth: the yawning wound
Gush'd out a purple stream, and stain'd the ground.
His snowy neck reclines upon his breast,
Like a fair flow'r by the keen share oppress'd—
Like a white poppy sinking on the plain,
Whose heavy head is overcharg'd with rain.
Despair, and rage, and vengeance justly vow'd,

Drove Nisus headlong on the hostile crowd.
Volscens he seeks: on him alone he bends:
Borne back and bor'd by his surrounding friends,
Onward he press'd, and kept him still in sight,
Then whirl'd aloft his sword with all his might:
Th' unerring steel descended while he spoke,
Pierc'd his wide mouth, and through his weason broke.
Dying, he slew; and, stagg'ring on the plain,
With swimming eyes he sought his lover slain;
Then quiet on his bleeding bosom fell,
Content, in death, to be reveng'd so well.
O happy friends! for, if my verse can give
Immortal life, your fame shall ever live,
Fix'd as the Capitol's foundation lies,
And spread, where'er the Roman eagle flies.
The conqu'ring party first divide the prey,
Then their slain leader to the camp convey.
With wonder, as they went, the troops were fill'd,
To see such numbers, whom so few had kill'd.
Sarranus, Rhamnes, and the rest, they found:
Vast crowds the dying and the dead surround;
And the yet reeking blood o'erflows the ground.
All knew the helmet which Messapus lost,
But mourn'd a purchase that so dear had cost.
Now rose the ruddy morn from Tithon's bed,
And with the dawns of day the skies o'erspread:
Nor long the sun his daily course with-held,
But added colours to the world reveal'd;
When early Turnus, wak'ning with the light,
All clad in armour, calls his troops to fight.
His martial men with fierce harangues he fir'd,
And his own ardour in their souls inspir'd.
This done; to give new terror to his foes,
The heads of Nisus and his friend he shows,
Rais'd high on pointed spears—a ghastly sight!
Loud peals of shouts ensue, and barbarous delight.
Meantime the Trojans run, where danger calls:
They line their trenches, and they man their walls.

In front extended to the left they stood:
Safe was the right, surrounded by the flood.
But, casting from their tow'rs a frightful view,
They saw the faces, which too well they knew,
Though then disguis'd in death, and smear'd all o'er
With filth obscene, and dropping putrid gore.
Soon hasty Fame through the sad city bears
The mournful message to the mother's ears.
An icy cold benumbs her limbs: she shakes:
Her cheeks the blood, her hand the web forsakes.
She runs the rampires round amidst the war,
Nor fears the flying darts: she rends her hair,
And fills with loud laments the liquid air.
"Thus, then, my lov'd Euryalus appears!
Thus looks the prop of my declining years!
Was't on this face my famish'd eyes I fed?
Ah! how unlike the living is the dead!
And could'st thou leave me, cruel, thus alone?
Not one kind kiss from a departing son!
No look, no last adieu before he went,
In an ill-boding hour to slaughter sent!
Cold on the ground, and pressing foreign clay,
To Latian dogs and fowls he lies a prey!
Nor was I near, to close his dying eyes,
To wash his wounds, to weep his obsequies,
To call about his corpse his crying friends,
Or spread the mantle (made for other ends)
On his dear body, which I wove with care,
Nor did my daily pains or nightly labour spare.
Where shall I find his corpse? what earth sustains
His trunk dismember'd, and his cold remains?
For this, alas! I left my needful ease,
Expos'd my life to winds, and winter seas!
If any pity touch Rutulian hearts,
Here empty all your quivers, all your darts:
Or, if they fail, thou, Jove, conclude my woe,
And send me thunder-struck to shades below!"

HORACE

Dedication

MAECENAS of a royal name,
O thou my earnest pride and trust,
Some men there are whose favorite game
It is to acquire Olympic dust,
And when their chariots cross the line
They feel no lower than divine.

This man is glad if fickle Rome
Him honors thrice; that if he stores
In his own silo safe at home
What's swept from Libyan threshing floors;
The farmer plows the fields—a notion
He'd not give up to plow the ocean.

The trader dreads the south-west wind
That lashes the Icarian sea;
He praises calm, and yearns to find
The homely peace of field and tree;
Yet he, unused to any hardship,
Will soon repair his sadly-starred ship.

Some love the bowls of Massic wine,
And steal the hours from business woes
Beneath a green arbute supine,
And where some prattling brooklet flows.
(Parenthesis for this translation:
A far from irksome occupation.)

Some love what makes the mothers sigh—
The wars, the camp, the clarion clear;
And out beneath a chilly sky
The hunter loves to stalk the deer,
Or trap, his tender wife forgetting,
The Marsian boar burst from his netting.

But ivy, prize of poet's brows,
Unites me with the lofty gods;
And me the grove with cooling boughs
Withdraws from all the vulgar clods—
If but Euterpe's flute may fire me
And Polyhymnia's lyre inspire me.
If as a bard thou rank'st me high
My happy head would scale the sky.

Virgil's Voyage

So MAY Cyprus' heavenly queen,
So Helen's brothers, stars of brightest sheen,
Guide thee! May the Sire of wind
Opposing gales, save only Zephyr, bind!

So do thou, fair ship, that ow'st
Virgil, thy precious freight, to the Attic coast
Safe restore thy loan and whole,
And save from death the partner of my soul.

Oak and brass of triple fold
Encompassed sure that heart that first made bold
To the raging sea to trust
A fragile bark, nor feared the Afric gust

With its northern mates at strife,
Nor Hyads' frown, nor South Wind fury-rife,
Mightiest power that Hadria knows,
Wills he the waves to madden or compose.

What had Death in store to awe
Those eyes, that huge sea beasts unmelting saw—
Saw the swelling of the surge,
And high Ceraunian cliffs, the seaman's scourge?

Heaven's high providence in vain
Has severed countries with the estranging main,
If our vessels ne'ertheless
With reckless plunge that sacred bar transgress.

Daring all their goal to win,
Men tread forbidden ground and rush on sin:
Daring all, Prometheus played
His wily game, and fire to man conveyed;

Soon as fire was stolen away,
Pale Fever's stranger host and wan Decay
Swept o'er earth's polluted face,
And slow Fate quickened Death's once halting pace.

Daedalus the void air tried
On wings to human kind by Heaven denied;
Acheron's bar gave way with ease
Before the arm of laboring Hercules.

Nought is there for man too high;
Our impious folly e'en would climb the sky,
Braving the dweller on the steep,
Nor let the bolts of heavenly vengeance sleep.

Impermanence

SHARP winter melts with Spring's delicious birth;
The ships glide down on rollers to the sea;
The herds forsake their stalls, the hind his hearth;
No more with hoar-frost gleams the whitened lea.
Venus from Cythera the dances leads,

And hand in hand the Nymphs and Graces come,
And tread the moonlit sward while Vulcan feeds
The fires that heat the Cyclops' busy home.
With myrtle now 'tis time to wreathe our brows,
Or flowers up-springing from the earth let loose,
And in the shady grove to pay our vows
With lamb or kid, whichever Faunus choose.
Pale Death alike knocks at the poor man's house
And the King's palace. Happy Sextius! Few
And brief the hopes our little day allows;
Dark night brings on apace the shadowy crew
Of Pluto's dismal reign; once thou art there,
The mastership of toasts thou ne'er wilt get,
Nor look on Lycidas, whose beauty rare
Now the young men, and soon the girls will pet.

To Pyrrha

WHAT slender youth bedewed with liquid odours
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha, for whom bindst thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain: and seas
Rough with black winds and storms
Unwonted shall admire:
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they
To whom thou untried seem'st fair. Me in my vowed
Picture the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dripping weeds
To the stern God of Sea.

Time's Awasting

Now STANDS Soracte white with snow,
Now bend the laboring trees,
And with the sharpness of the frost
The stagnant rivers freeze.

Pile up the billets on the hearth,
To warmer cheer incline,
And draw, my Thaliarchus, from
The Sabine jar of wine.

The rest leave to the gods who still
The fiercely warring wind,
And to tomorrow's store of good
Or evil give no mind.

Whatever day your fortune grants,
That day mark up for gain;
And in your youthful bloom do not
The sweet amours disdain.

Now on the Campus and the squares,
When evening shades descend,
Soft whisperings again are heard,
And loving voices blend;

And now the low delightful laugh
Betrays the lurking maid,
While from her slowly yielding arms
The forfeiture is paid.

Use Today, Forget Tomorrow

Ask not, 't is not right to know it,
What last end for thee and me
Heaven has set, nor Babylonian
Numbers try, Leuconöe.

Better, whate'er comes, to bear it;
Whether many winters more
We shall see, or this our last be,
Which along the Etruscan shore

Hurls the waves in spray to perish
On the shifting shingly beach
If thou'rt wise thou'lt quaff, and quickly
Grasp the hopes within thy reach.
Even now, whilst we are talking,
Grudging time pursues his flight:
Use today, and trust as little
As thou mayst tomorrow's light.

Love Unreasoning

Telephus—you praise him still,
His waxen arms, his rosy-tinted neck;
Ah! and all the while I thrill
With jealous pangs I cannot, cannot check.

See! My color comes and goes,
My poor heart flutters, Lydia, and the dew
Down my cheek soft stealing shows
What lingering torments rack me through and through.

Oh! 'tis agony to see
Those snow-white shoulders scarred in drunken fray,

Or those rosy lips, where he
Has left strange marks that show how rough his play.

Never, never look to find
A faithful heart in him whose rage can harm
Sweetest lips, which Venus kind
Has tinctured with her quintessential charm.

Happy, happy, happy they
Whose living love, untroubled by all strife,
Binds them till the last sad day,
Nor parts asunder but with parting life!

Ship of State

O SHIP OF STATE,
You are drifting again to sea
On a new ebb of folly!
What madness is this?
Hasten to safe harbor!

Your sides are depleted of oars;
The swift Southerly
Has started your mast;
Your yards groan.
Without the ropes to lash it,
How can your keel endure
The ruthless seas?

None of your sails is whole,
No figurehead remains
To bring you luck in evil weather.
Pontic pine, noblest daughter of the forest
Is a useless thing and a futile name
When you broach to, in the gale.
No cautious seaman banks much

On painted idols.
Beware, O Ship, or you will be
A plaything of the winds!
Lately you have been my grave concern,
Soon you will be a lost regret,
Unless you avoid the glittering seas
That flow between the Cyclades.

Apology

O LOVELIER than the lovely dame
That bore you, sentence as you please
Those scurril verses, be it flame
Your vengeance craves, or Hadrian seas.

Not Cybele, nor he that haunts
Rich Pytho, worse the brain confounds,
Not Bacchus nor the Corybants
Clash their loud gongs with fiercer sounds

Than savage wrath; nor sword nor spear
Appals it, no, nor ocean's frown,
Nor ravening fire, nor Jupiter
In hideous ruin crashing down.

Prometheus, forced, they say, to add
To his prime clay some favorite part,
From every kind, took lion mad,
And lodged its gall in man's poor heart.

'Twas wrath that laid Thyestes low;
'Tis wrath that oft destruction calls
On cities, and invites the foe
To drive his plow o'er ruined walls.

Then calm your spirit; I can tell
How once, when youth in all my veins

Was glowing, blind with rage, I fell
On friend and foe in ribald strains.

Come, let me change my sour for sweet,
And smile complacent as before;
Hear me my palinode repeat,
And give me back your heart once more.

The Pure Soul

THE MAN of life unblemished ever,
Of hand unstained by evil deed,
Nor Moorish darts nor bow nor quiver
With poisoned arrows stuffed will need,

Whether it be his lot to fare
Through burning Syrtes or to brave
The Caucasus repellent, bare,
Or story-famed Hydaspes' wave.

For as I wandered fancy-free
Beyond my bounds in Sabine wood,
Singing my darling Lalage,
I met a wolf, and, though I stood

Unarmed, it fled me. Nor Apulia
Such monster in her forests rears,
Wide as they stretch, nor realm of Juba,
Dry nurse of lions, ever bears.

Place me in plains inert where ne'er
A tree is waked by summer breeze,
Or that side of the world's orb where
The chilling clouds and airs men freeze;

Place me right 'neath the sun-god's ray
In lands where no man dwells or toils;

And there I'll love my Lalage,
Her winsome prattle, winsome smiles.

The Timid Maiden

YOU SHUN me, Chloe. Like a fawn
That seeks his timorous dam forlorn
In pathless wild,
Needlessly nervous when the breeze
Rustles the mountain forest trees,
You shun me, child.

Is it the coming of the Spring
Hath set the leaves aquivering
On all the trees?
Is it the parting of the brambles
By the green lizards? There he trembles,
His heart, his knees.

Why, Chloe, I'm no savage beast
Bent on your blood and bones to feast;
Be not so coy;
'Tis time for you to quit your mother,
Ay, now, 'tis time to seek another—
A husband, Chloe.

Dirge

WHY BLUSH to let our tears unmeasured fall
For one so dear? Begin the mournful stave,
Melpomene, to whom the Sire of all
Sweet voice with music gave.

And sleeps he then the heavy sleep of death,
Quintilius? Piety, twin sister dear

Of Justice, naked Truth, unsullied Faith,
When will ye find his peer?

By many a good man wept, Quintilius dies;
By none than you, my Virgil, trulier wept:
Devout in vain you chide the faithless skies,
Asking your loan ill-kept.

No, though more suasive than the bard of Thrace
You swept the lyre that trees were fain to hear,
Ne'er should the blood revisit his pale face
Whom once with wand severe

Mercury has folded with the sons of night,
Untaught to prayer Fate's prison to unseal.
Ah, heavy grief! But patience makes more light
What sorrow may not heal.

The Old Coquette

SWAINS in numbers
Break your slumbers,
Saucy Lydia, now but seldom,
Ay, though at your casement nightly,
Tapping loudly, tapping lightly,
By the dozen once you held them.

Ever turning,
Night and morning
Swung your door upon its hinges;
Now, from dawn till evening's closing,
Lone and desolate reposing,
Not a soul its rest infringes.

Serenaders,
Sweet invaders,

Scanter grow, and daily scanter,
Singing, "Lydia, art thou sleeping?
Lonely watch thy love is keeping!
Wake, O wake, thou dear enchanter!"

Lone and faded,
You, as they did,
Woo, and in your turn are slighted,
Worn and torn by passion's fret.
You, the pitiless coquette,
Waste by fires yourself have lighted,

Late relenting,
Left lamenting,—
"Withered leaves strew wintry brooks!
Ivy garlands greenly darkling,
Myrtles brown with dew-drops sparkling,
Best beseem youth's glowing looks!"

The Confession

THE THRACIANS raise their wine-cups, meant for pleasure
Only to throw them at each other:
Blow such barbarian boorishness,
And save bright Bacchus
From all bloody brawls!
The daggers of the Medes are different, far,
From the warm wine, and the lamp
That will burn all night.
Pipe down, good friends,
Pipe down and keep your seats!
Me drink a bumper of the sharp Falernum?
Well, then: first let Megilla's brother
From Opus have the floor,
To tell us with what cosy wound he's blessed,
And all about the arrow which

Has pierced his heart.—What?
You cannot bring yourself to answer?
Then I refuse to drink!
Whoever this enchanting creature be,
Surely she glows with fires which need
To raise no blush;
Surely you never sin
With a girl not quite,
Shall we say, well-born?
Whoever is on your mind, come,
Confide it to the confidential breezes.
Ah, so? Too bad, too bad!
With what a fearful vampire
You have been struggling!
Young man, you are worthy of a better flame!
I wonder what witch, or what magician
Can hope to set you free
With Thessalian poisons?
It's a task
Which many a god would stumble at.
Even on Pegasus, I doubt if you
Could hope to rid yourself of this
Fire-eating,
Lion-headed,
Snake-tailed apparition!

The Poet's Prayer

WHAT blessing shall the bard entreat
The god he hallows, as he pours
The winecup? Not the mounds of wheat
That load Sardinian threshing floors;
Not Indian gold or ivory—no,
Nor flocks that o'er Calabria stray,
Nor fields that Liris, still and slow,
Is eating, unperceived, away.

Let those whose fate allows them train
Calenum's vine, let trader bold
From golden cups rich liquor drain
For wares of Syria bought and sold,
Heaven's favorites, sooth, for thrice a year
He comes and goes across the brine
Undamaged. I in plenty here
On endives, mallows, succory dine.
Oh, grant me, Phoebus, calm content,
Strength unimpaired, a mind entire,
Old age without dishonor spent,
Nor unbefriended by the lyre.

The Conversion

WISE in the lore of philosophic fools
I strayed perplexed amid conflicting schools:
I worshipped not, believed not, hoped not! Now
To long-neglected gods perforce must bow,
Reverse my shattered sail, and turn once more,
Repentant, to the course I steered of yore;
For Jove, whose lightnings from Olympus hurled
Erewhile through rifted storm-clouds smote the world,
Through cloudless skies and azure depths afar
Drove now his fiery steeds and thunder-winged car.
Trembled the solid earth, the ocean floor,
The wandering rivers, and the Stygian shore,
Dark Taenarus accurst and Atlas hoar.

There is a god: his justice and his might
Adjust the balance of the world aright;
Abase the proud; exalt and glorify
The lowly grace of true humility.
Fortune at his command plucks monarchs down,
And on the humble outcast lays the crown.

Cleopatra

DRINK, my companions, drink!
Shake the ground with your dancing,
Deck the couch of the gods,
And eat as you would eat
At an old-time Saliar feast!

Ere now it would not have been fitting
To take the Caecuban wine
Out from the cellars ancestral,
While that queen was preparing
The ruin of our city,
And the funeral of our empire,
For which she had hoped in her madness—
She, and her loathsome herd
Of creatures vile with disease,
So ungoverned,
So drunk with success,
That they could hope for anything!

But when the battle had ended,
When the sound and the fury was done,
She found herself
With scarce one ship
Saved from the flames;
And the captives,
Whom the Marean battle
Had made mad with fright,
Knew true terror now.

Caesar pressed on from Italy
Against the fugitives,
Like a hawk after doves,

Or a hunter in the snowy Haemonian fields
Against a swift hare,
So that he might give
This monstrous queen to chains.

Seeking a more noble end,
She shuddered not
With a woman's fear of the sword;
She sought not to escape
With her swift fleet to some distant realm,
To supplant her lost Egypt
With eyes serene, she dared
To look upon her fallen palace—
Dared to take in her hands
The maddened vipers,
That her body might deeply drink
Of their deadly venom.
And once resolved to die,
She was more fiercely proud.—
—How she hated our cruel Liburnian sailors!—
She was a woman,
Yet her spirit fell never so low
That she could let herself,
Yesterday a queen,
Become tomorrow
A captive in a Roman triumph

The Last Exile

When life is hard, your soul possess
In calm serene; when times are fair,
Refrain from triumph's haughty air,
For, Dellius, death will come no less

If length of days be wholly spanned
With grief, or if, as glad hours laugh,

You lie in quiet meads and quaff
Falernum's wine of choicest brand,

Where lofty pines and poplars white
Their boughs in friendly shade entwine
Together, and with winding line
The brooklet babbles in its flight.

Here call for wine and nard and bloom
Of roses fading all too fast,
While youth remains and fortunes last
And Fate still spares the thread of doom.

The lawns you buy you must forsake,
The home by tawny Tiber's wave;
The growing stores for which you slave
In heirship will another take.

What boots your wealth or long descent
From Inachus? As well to lie
A lowly beggar 'neath the sky
For any ruth in Death's intent.

One bourne constrains us all; for all
The lots are shaken in the urn,
Whence, soon or late, will fall our turn
Of exile's barge without recall.

Love Is Like That

NAY, XANTHIAS, my friend, never blush, man—no, no!
Why should you not love your own maid, if you please?
Briseis of old, with her bosom of snow,
Brought the haughty Achilles himself to his knees.

By his captive Tecmessa was Telamon's son,
Stout Ajax, to willing captivity tamed:

Atrides, in triumph, was wholly undone,
With love for the slave of his war-spear inflamed,

In the hot hour of triumph, when, quelled by the spear
Of Celides, in heaps the barbarians lay;
And Troy, with her Hector no longer to fear,
To the war-wearied Greeks fell an easier prey.

For aught that you know, now, fair Phyllis may be
The shoot of some highly respectable stem;
Nay, she counts, at the least, a few kings in her tree,
And laments the lost acres once lorded by them.

Never think that a creature so exquisite grew
In the haunts where but vice and dishonor are known,
Nor deem that a girl so unselfish, so true,
Had a mother 'twould shame thee to take for thine own.

I extol with free heart, and with fancy as free,
Her sweet face, fine ankles, and tapering arms.
How? Jealous? Nay, trust an old fellow like me,
Who can feel, but not follow, where loveliness charms.

Home Is Best

SEPTIMIUS, who with me would brave
Far Gades, and Cantabrian land
Untamed by Rome, and Moorish wave
That whirls the sand:

Fair Tibur, town of Argive kings,
There would I end my days serene,
At rest from seas and travelings,
And service seen.

Should angry Fate those wishes foil,
Then let me see Galaesus sweet,

The skin-clad sheep, and that rich soil,
The Spartan's seat.

Oh! what can match the green recess
Whose honey not to Hybla yields,
Whose olives vie with those that bless
Venafrum's fields!

Long springs, mild winters glad that spot
By Jove's good grace, and Aulon, dear
To fruitful Bacchus, envies not
Falernian cheer.

That spot, those happy heights desire
Our sojourn; there, when life shall end,
Your tear shall dew my yet warm pyre,
Your bard and friend.

Welcome Home!

O OFT with me in troublous time
Involved when Brutus warred in Greece,
Who gives you back to your own clime
And your own Gods, a man of peace,
Pompey, the earliest friend I knew,
With whom I oft cut short the hours
With wine, my hair bright-bathed in dew
Of Syrian oils and wreathed with flowers?
With you I shared Philippi's rout,
Unseemly parted from my shield,
When Valor fell, and warriors stout
Were tumbled on the inglorious field.
But I was saved by Mercury,
Wrapped in thick mist yet trembling sore,
While you to that tempestuous sea
Were swept by battle's tide once more.
Come pay to Jove the feast you owe;

Lay down those limbs with warfare spent,
Beneath my laurel; nor be slow
To drain my cask—for you 'twas meant.
Lethe's true draught is Massic wine;
Fill high the goblet; pour out free
Rich streams of unguent. Who will twine
The hasty wreath from myrtle tree
Or parsley? Whom will Venus seat
Chairman of cups? Are Bacchants sane?
Then I'll be sober. Ah, 'tis sweet
To fool, when friends come home again!

The Golden Mean

Live so that you tempt not the sea relentless,
Neither press too close on the shore forbidding;
Flee extremes, and choose thou the mean all-golden,
Treasure all priceless.

Safe, you dread not poverty's hut repellent;
Wise, you seek not mansions that men may envy;
All secure, protected by moderation,
Fate cannot harm you.

Tallest pines are soon by the storm blasts shattered,
Turrets high may fall with the loudest clamor,
Tow'ring peaks are seared by the lightning's fury,
Dangerous, earth's summits.

Lighten grief with hopes of a brighter morrow;
Temper joy, in fear of a change of fortune;
Bear the winters, knowing, despite their fury,
Jove will recall them.

If, today, misfortune besiege thy pathway,
Still the future beckons a smiling promise;

Soon Apollo leaving his arrows dreaded
 Makes the Muse tuneful.

Thus in stormy days be of heart courageous
And, when waves are calm, and the danger over,
Wise man, trim your sails when a gale too prosp'rous
 Swells out the canvas.

A Narrow Escape

ACCURSED his hand that made thee grow,
And black the day he planted thee,
Foredoomed to work his children woe,
And shame the village, vicious tree!

Who set thee upon my estate,
Disastrous log, to tumble on
The master's undeserving pate?
I dare not think what he has done.

He broke his father's neck; he smote
His guest beside the midnight hearth;
With dark Medea's drugs he wrought
And every bane devised on earth.

From hour to hour not one of us
Takes thought of his peculiar doom;
Bold sailors dread the Bosphorus
Nor heed what other fate may loom.

We fear the Mede who shoots and flies,
And he the prison walls of Rome,
And still in unimagined guise
Comes Death on man, and aye will come.

How near the sombre Queen of Hell
And Aeacus the judge was I!

The mansions where the blessed dwell,
And Sappho wailing dolefully

Of her unloving maids: and thee,
Alcaeus, as thou chantest o'er
With golden quill the toils of sea,
The toils of exile, toils of war.

The shades attend in solemn awe
As meet they may when either sings,
But keener list and closer draw
To songs of fights and banished kings.

Nay, e'en the hundred-headed hound
Slinks every ear and listens thrilled;
And all the snakes that writhe around
The Furies' heads are charmed and stilled.

Prometheus, too, amid his woes,
And Pelops' sire have rest a space;
Orion hearkens and foregoes
The lion and the lynx to chase.

The Shortness of Life

Alas, my Postumus, our years
Glide silently away. No tears,
No loving orisons repair
The wrinkled cheek, the whitening hair
That drop forgotten to the tomb.
Pluto's inexorable doom
Mocks at thy daily sacrifice.
Around his dreary kingdom lies
That fatal stream whose arms infold
The giant race accurst of old:

All, all alike must cross its wave,
The king, the noble, and the slave.
In vain we shun the battle's roar,
And breakers dashed on Adria's shore;
Vainly we flee in terror blind
The plague that walketh on the wind,
The sluggish river of the dead,
Cocytus, must be visited;
The Danaids' detested brood,
Foul with their murdered husbands' blood,
And Sisyphus with ghastly smile
Pointing to his eternal toil.
All must be left; the gentle wife,
Thy home, the joys of rural life:
And when thy fleeting days are gone
Th' ill-omened cypresses alone
Of all thy fondly cherished trees
Shall grace thy funeral obsequies,
Cling to thy loved remains, and wave
Their mournful shadows o'er thy grave.
A lavish but a nobler heir
Thy hoarded Caecuban shall share,
And on the tessellated floor
The purple nectar madly pour—
Nectar more worthy of the halls
Where pontiffs hold high festivals.

Restiveness

WHEN storm clouds veil the moon's pale glow, and stars
No longer shine with light serene to guide
The pilot in his course, what sailor bold . . .
The victim of an open, grasping sea . . .
Invokes not all his gods for quiet then?
For peace, Grosphus, the Thracian cries, now crazed

By war's mad strife; 'tis peace the Mede, too, craves,
Adorned with quiver, bow, and deadly dart . . .
The peace not bought with gems, nor gold, nor dyes.

To quell the tumult of the soul and drive
Away the cares from panelled doors of state
Both wealth and pow'r are far too small and weak.
He lives well in his poverty for whom
His father's silver gleams with lovely glow
On frugal table; fear and base desire
Can never rouse him from his restful sleep.

Why, then, in life which soon must end, do we
Undaunted, strive for all things known to men
Or restlessly our fatherland exchange
For lands warmed by another sun? What man,
An exile from his native soil, can flee
Himself, his cares, his fears, his driving woes?
Still morbid Care will mount the ships of bronze,
Will keep her pace with throngs of horsemen fleet,
Outrun the deer, outspeed the Eastern wind.

The mind rejoicing in today's glad store
Will scorn to fret about tomorrow's cares,
And temper all its sorrows with a smile,
In all this world no perfect good exists.
Yet Nature's law of compensation works:
Achilles felt death's unexpected blow,
Tithonus lived in life a lingering death;
And what Time gives to me, perhaps it will
Deny to you, who proudly may possess
Your herds of lowing cattle, mares, and fields,
Your woolen garments dipped in purple dye.
To me, just Fate has granted one small farm,
The tender spirit of the Grecian muse,
And pow'r to shun the malice of the mob.

Bacchus' Might

LET FUTURE times the wondrous tale believe!
I saw the mighty god of wine,
Mid rocks remote erect his shrine,
And holy lectures give;
Attended by a Sylvan train;
Goat-footed satyrs list'ning stood,
With guardian nymphs from every wood,
Well-pleased to hear the great instructive strain.

E'en I, who worship with a heart sincere;
Yet tremble at the awful nod
And bow before the mighty God
With reverence and fear:
My breast the sacred influence feels:—
Then drop the spear,—abate thy rage,
For lo! fierce anger to assuage,
Thy humble, supplicating vot'ry kneels!

Permit the adventurous bard to sing thy praise,
Thy priestesses with zeal inspired,
Their num'rous train with frenzy fired,
And stubborn Thyades:
What streams of luscious wine, for thee;
For thee, what milky fountains pour,
Increasing still thy plenteous store
With honey, dropping from the hollow tree.

Of Ariadne's num'rous charms I tell,
Who, beauteous with her silver hairs,
Adorned the skies with added stars;
And how Lycurgus fell·
How Pentheus felt thy angry frown!

Who impiously profaned thy name;
For which his palace wrapped in flame
Tumbled, with hideous, spreading ruin down.

Thy power does o'er remotest realms extend;
Oceans that feel barbaric sway,
Thy guardian Deity obey,
And mighty rivers bend:
O'er craggy mountain-tops with speed,
(While snakes hang peaceful down each back,
Or harmless twist around the neck)
The joyous train of Bacchanals you lead.

You, when the giants dared to climb on high,
With impious force to tumble down
Your sire from his almighty throne,
And hurl him from the sky:
In lion's form you joined the fight;
The dreadful conflict dauntless stood,
With feet and jaws besmeared with blood,
And Rhoetus, with his monsters put to flight.

More skilled to rule the dancing merry choir,
You seemed; as formed for sloth and ease,
In softer sports alone to please,
Unused to war's uproar:—
But when in battle you appear,
In danger's front you fearless shone,
The bloody art soon made your own;
Though mild in peace, yet terrible in war.

When rising glorious from Hell's drear abode,
The shining horns that grace thy head,
A beamy lustre round thee spread:
And awed before the god,
In humble posture, as was meet,

Grim Cer'brus saw with fear amazed,
Grew kinder as he fondly gazed,
And fawning, wagged his tail, and licked thy feet.

Contentment

I SCORN and shun the rabble's noise.
Abstain from idle talk! A thing
That ear hath not yet heard, I sing,
The Muses' priest, to maids and boys.

To Jove the flocks which great kings sway,
To Jove great kings allegiance owe.
Praise him: he laid the giants low:
All things that are, his nod obey.

This man may plant in broader lines
His fruit trees: that the pride of race
Enlists a candidate for place:
In worth, in fame, a third outshines

His mates; or, thronged with clients, claims
Precedence. Even-handed fate
Hath but one law for small and great:
That ample urn holds all men's names.

He o'er whose doomed neck hangs the sword
Unsheathed, the dainties of the South
Shall lack their sweetness in his mouth:
No note of bird or harpsichord

Shall bring him Sleep. Yet Sleep is kind,
Nor scorns the huts of laboring men;
The bank where shadows play, the glen
Of Tempe dancing in the wind.

He, who but asks 'Enough,' defies
 Wild waves to rob him of his ease;
 He fears no rude shocks, when he sees
Arcturus set or Haedus rise:

When hailstones lash his vines, or fails
 His farm its promise, now of rains
 And now of stars that parch the plains
Complaining, or unkindly gales.

In straitened seas the fish are pent;
 For dams are sunk into the deep:
 Pile upon pile the builders heap,
And he, whom earth could not content,

The Master. Yet shall Fear and Hate
 Climb where their Master climbs; nor e'er
 From armed trireme parts black Care,
He sits behind, the horseman's mate.

And if red marble shall not ease
 The heartache; nor the shell that shines
 Star-bright nor all Falernum's vines,
All scents that charmed Achaemenes:

Why should I rear me halls of rare
 Design, on proud shafts mounting high?
 Why bid my Sabine vale good-bye
For doubled wealth and doubled care?

Call to Youth

LET EVERY Roman boy be taught to know
Constraining hardship as a friend, and grow
 Strong in fierce warfare, with dread lance and horse
Encountering the gallant Parthian foe.

Aye. let him live beneath the open sky
In danger. Him from leaguered walls should eye
 Mother and daughter of th' insurgent king,
And she for her betrothed, with many a sigh,

Should pray, poor maiden, lest, when hosts engage,
Unversed in arms he face that lion's rage
 So dangerous to trust what time he gluts
His wrath upon the battle's bloody stage.

For country 'tis a sweet and seemly thing
To die. Death ceases not from following
 E'en runaways. Can youth with feeble knees,
That fears to face the battle, scape his wing?

Defeat true manliness can never know:
Honors untarnished still it has to show.
 Not taking up or laying office down
Because the fickle mob will have it so.

'Tis Manliness lifts men too good to die,
And finds a way to that forbidden sky:
 Above the thronging multitudes, above
The clinging mists of earth it rises high.

Nor less abides to loyal secrecy
A sure reward: I would not have him be
 Neath the same roof, the babbler who reveals
Demeter's secret things, or launch with me

A shallop frail: The god of heav'n has blent
Oft in one doom th' unclean and innocent:
 Seldom the miscreant has scaped the slow
And sure pursuit of halting punishment.

Strength of the Righteous

He that is just, and firm in will
Doth not before the fury quake
Of mobs that instigate to ill,
Nor hath the tyrant's menace skill
His fixed resolve to shake;

Nor Auster, at whose wild command
The Adriatic billows dash,
Nor Jove's dread thunder-launching hand.
Yea, if the globe should fall, he'll stand
Serene amidst the crash.

By constancy like this sustained,
Pollux of yore, and Hercules
The starry eminences gained
Where Caesar with lips purple-stained,
Quaffs nectar, stretched at ease.

Thou, by this power, Sire Bacchus, led,
To bear the yoke thy pards didst school,
Through this same power Quirinus fled,
By Mars' own horses charioted,
The Acherontine pool.

What time the gods to council came,
And Juno spoke with gracious tone,
"That umpire lewd and doomed to shame,
And his adulterous foreign dame
Troy, Troy have overthrown;

"Troy doomed to perish in its pride
By chaste Minerva and by me,
Her people, and their guileful guide,

Since false Laomedon denied
The gods their promised fee.

"The Spartan wanton's shameless guest
No longer flaunts in brave array,
Nor screened by Hector's valiant breast,
Doth Priam's perjured house arrest
My Argives in the fray.

"Protracted by our feuds no more,
The war is quelled. So I abate
Mine anger, and to Mars restore
Him, whom the Trojan priestess bore,
The grandchild of my hate.

"Him will I suffer to attain
These realms of light, these blest abodes,
The juice of nectar pure to drain,
And be enrolled amid the train
Of the peace-breathing gods.

"As long as the broad rolling sea
Shall roar 'twixt Ilion and Rome,
Wherever there wandering exiles be;
There let them rule, be happy, free;
Whilst Priam's, Paris' tomb

"Is trodden over by roving kine,
And wild beasts there securely breed,
The Capitol afar may shine,
And Rome, proud Rome her laws assign
Unto the vanquished Mede.

"Yes, let her spread her name of fear,
To farthest shores; where central waves
Part Africa from Europe, where

Nile's swelling current half the year
The plains with plenty laves.

"Still let her scorn to search with pain
For gold, the earth hath wisely hid,
Nor strive to wrest with hands profane
What is to man forbid.

"Let earth's remotest regions still
Her conquering arms to glory call,
Where scorching suns the long day fill,
Where mists and snows and tempests chill
Hold reckless bacchanal.

"But let Quirinus' sons beware,
For they are doomed to sure annoy,
Should they in foolish fondness e'er
Or vaunting pride the homes repair
Of their ancestral Troy.

"In evil hour should Troy once more
Arise, it shall be crushed anew,
By hosts that over it stride in gore,
By me conducted, as of yore
Jove's spouse and sister too.

"Thrice rear a brazen wall, and though
Apollo's self his audience lent,
Thrice shall my Argives lay it low,
Thrice shall the captive wife in woe
Her lord and babes lament."

But whither would'st thou, Muse? Unmeet
For jocund lyre are themes like these.
Shalt thou the talk of gods repeat
Debasing by the strains effete
Such lofty mysteries?

Power of the Muses

CALLIOPE, the heavens forsake,
And fill with lingering song the flute:
Or lift thy silvery voice, or wake
The chords of Phoebus' lute.

O listen! Are these mocking dreams,
That she is bidding me to rove
Where pleasant airs and pleasant streams
Caress the holy grove?

Once, when a child on Voltur's steep
Beyond Apulia's bounds I strayed,
And, tired of play was fain to sleep,
The fairy ring-doves made

My bed of leaves—a marvel told
By folk along the Bantine dale,
From Acherontia's craggy hold,
To rich Forentum's vale;

How safe from deadly snake or bear,
'Neath bay and holy myrtle piled,
I slumbered sure, the gods had care
Of such a daring child!

So, when I seek bright Baiae's shores,
Low Tibur, or Praeneste chill,
Or climb my Sabine uplands, yours,
Yours, Muses, am I still.

I love your choirs and founts, and ye
Have kept me safe through divers harms:
Philippi's rout, yon fatal tree,
And Palinurus' storms.

If ye be still at my right hand,
I'll trudge with willing heart across
Assyria's waste of scorching sand,
Or sail wild Bosphorus,

'Mid savage Britons go unhurt,
And Basques who drink of horses' blood,
Or Scythians with quivers girt,
Where rolls the Volga's flood.

So, when his war-torn companies
Great Caesar hath to quarters brought,
And turns to rest, ye give him ease
In your Pierian grot,

Good Nine, who give and love to give
Your counsel soft. We know full well
How on the Titans' monstrous hive
The crashing levin fell

Of Jove, who sways the windy seas,
Dull earth, and towns and realms of gloom,
And throngs of men and deities,
With one impartial doom.

Yet cause enough had Jove to dread
The bristling arms of those proud foes,
Who strove on dark Olympus' head
Huge Pelion to impose.

But what could lusty Mimas do,
Or what Porphyrion's front of scorn,
What Rhoetus, or his twin who threw
Like spears the trees uptorn,

'Gainst Pallas' changing shield? and there
With Jove stood Vulcan, hungry-eyed,

And Juno Queen, and he who ne'er
Shall lay his bow aside,

Who bathes his hair in crystal floods
Of Castaly, and aye doth guard
His native Lycia's brakes and woods—
Delos' and Patara's lord.

Blind force of its own might is spent;
Self-tempered force the gods prolong
To higher ends; but they resent
A power that works for wrong.

Let hundred-handed Gyas be
My witness, and Orion who
Attempted Dian's purity
And whom her arrow slew.

Earth, piled above her brood, may fret
And moan for them the thunder cast
To pallid Hell; no quick flame yet
Hath gnawed through Etna vast;

And still o'er wanton Tityus' veins
The vulture perches at his post;
And still Pirithous lies in chains
And pays the price of lust.

The Roman Way

Jove rules the skies, his thunder wielding:
Augustus Caesar, thou on earth shalt be
Enthroned a present Deity;
Britons and Parthian hordes to Rome their proud necks yielding.

Woe to the Senate that endures to see
(O fire extinct of old nobility!)
The soldier dead to honor and to pride
 Ingloriously abide
Grey-headed mate of a barbarian bride,
Freeman of Rome beneath a Median King!

Woe to the land that fears to fling
Its curse, not ransom, to the slave
Forgetful of the shield of Mars,
Of Vesta's unextinguished flame,
Of Roman garb, of Roman name;
The base unpitied slave who dares
From Rome his forfeit life to crave!
In vain;—Immortal Jove still reigns on high:
Still breathes in Roman hearts the Spirit Liberty.

With warning voice of stern rebuke
Thus Regulus the Senate shook;
He saw, prophetic, in far days to come,
The heart corrupt, and future doom of Rome.
"These eyes," he cried, "these eyes have seen
Unbloodied swords from warriors torn,
And Roman standards nailed in scorn
 On Punic shrines obscene;
Have seen the hands of free-born men
Wrenched back and bound; th' unguarded gate;
And fields our war laid desolate
By Romans tilled again.
What! will the gold-enfranchised slave
Return more loyal and more brave?
 Ye heap but loss on crime!
The wool that Cretan dyes distain
Can ne'er its virgin hue regain;
And valour fallen and disgraced
Revives not in a coward breast

Its energy sublime.
The stag released from hunter's toils
From the dread sight of man recoils.
Is he more brave than when of old
He ranged his forest free? Behold
In him your soldier. He has knelt
'To faithless foes; he too has felt
The knotted cord; and crouched beneath
Fear, not of shame, but Death.
He sued for peace, tho' vowed to war!
Will such men, girt in arms once more,
Dash headlong on the Punic shore?
No! they will buy their craven lives
With Punic scorn and Punic gyves.
O mighty Carthage, rearing high
Thy fame upon our infamy,
A city, aye, an empire built
On Roman ruins, Roman guilt."

From the chaste kiss and wild embrace
Of wife and babes he turned his face,
A man self-doomed to die;
Then bent his manly brow, in scorn,
Resolved, relentless, sad, but stern,
To earth, all silently;
Till counsel never heard before
Had nerved each wavering Senator;
Till flushed each cheek with patriot shame,
And surging rose the loud acclaim;—
Then, from his weeping friends, in haste,
To exile and to death he passed.

He knew the tortures that barbaric hate
Had stored for him. Exulting in his fate
With kindly hand he waved away
The crowds that strove his course to stay,

He passed from all, as when in days of yore,
His judgment given, thro' client throngs he pressed
In glad Venafrian fields to seek his rest,
Or Greek Tarentum on the Southern shore.

How Are We Fallen!

YE ROMANS, ye, though guiltless, shall
Dread expiation make for all
The laws your sires have broke,
Till ye repair with loving pains
The gods' dilapidated fanes,
Their Statues grimed with smoke!

Ye rule the world, because that ye
Confess the gods' supremacy;
Hence all your grandeur grows!
The gods, in vengeance for neglect,
Hesperia's wretched land have wrecked
Beneath unnumbered woes.

Twice have Monaeses, and the hordes
Of Pacorus withstood the swords
Of our ill-omened host.
No more in meagre torques equipped,
But decked with spoils from Romans stripped,
They of our ruin boast.

Dacian and Ethiop have well-nigh
Undone our Rome distracted by
Intestine feud and fray:
This by his fleet inspiring fear,
That by his shafts, which far and near
Spread havoc and dismay.

Our times, in sin prolific, first
The marriage-bed with taint have cursed,

And family and home;
This is the fountain-head of all
The sorrows and the ills that fall
On Romans and on Rome.

The ripening virgin joys to learn
In the Ionic dance to turn
And bend with plastic limb;
Still but a child, with evil gleams,
Incestuous loves, unhallowed dreams,
Before her fancy swim.

Straight, in her husband's wassail hours,
She seeks more youthful paramours,
And little seeks, on whom
She may her lawless joys bestow
By stealth, when all the lamps burn low,
And darkness shrouds the room.

Yea, she will on a summons fly,
Nor is her spouse unconscious why,
To some rich broker's arms,
Or some sea captain's fresh from Spain,
With wealth to buy her shame, and gain
Her mercenary charm.

She did not spring from sires like these,
The noble youths who dyed the seas
With Carthaginian gore,
Who great Antiochus overcame,
And Pyrrhus, and the dreaded name
Of Hannibal of yore;

But they, of rustic warriors wight
The manly offspring, learned to smite
The soil with Sabine spade,
And fagots they had cut to bear

Home from the forest, whensoever
An austere mother bade;

What time the sun began to change
The shadows through the mountain range,
And took the yoke away
From the overwearied oxen, and
His parting car proclaimed at hand
The kindliest hour of day.

How time doth in its flight debase
Whatever it finds! Our fathers' race,
More deeply versed in ill
Than were their sires, hath borne us yet
More wicked, duly to beget
A race more vicious still.

Keep Faith, Asterie!

WHY WEEP, Asterie, for the youth,
That soul of constancy and truth,
Whom from Bithynia's shore,
Rich with its wares, with gentle wing
The west winds shall in early spring
To thy embrace restore?

Driven by the southern gales, when high
Mad Capra's star ascends the sky
To Oricum, he keeps
Sad vigils through the freezing nights,
And, thinking of his lost delights
With thee, thy Gyges weeps.

Yet in a thousand artful ways
His hostess' messenger essays
To tempt him, urging how

Chloe—for such her name—is doomed
By fires like thine to be consumed,
And sighs as deep as those.

Narrating how by slanders vile
A woman's falsehood did beguile
The credulous Proetus on,
To hurry, with untimely haste,
Into the toils of death the chaste,
Too chaste, Bellerophon.

Of Peleus then she tells, who thus
Was nigh consigned to Tartarus,
Because his coldness shamed
Magnesia's queen Hippolyte,
And hints at stories craftily
To sap his virtue famed.

In vain! For he, untouched as yet,
Is deafer than the rocks that fret
The Icarian waves; but thou
Keep watch upon thy fancy too,
Nor to Enipeus there undue
Attractiveness allow!

Though no one on the Martian Mead
Can turn and wind a mettled steed
So skilfully as he;
Nor any breast the Tuscan tide
And dash its tawny waves aside
With such celerity.

At nightfall shut your doors, nor then
Look down into the street again
When quavering fifes complain;
And though he call thee, as he will,
Unjust, unkind, unfeeling, still
Inflexible remain!

Horace and Lydia

HORACE

WHILE, Lydia, I was lov'd of thee,
Nor any was preferr'd 'fore me
To hug thy whitest neck: than I,
The Persian King liv'd not more happily.

LYDIA

While thou no other didst affect,
Nor Chloe was of more respect;
Then Lydia, far-fam'd Lydia,
I flourish't more than Roman Ilia.

HORACE

Now Thracian Chloe governs me,
Skilfull i' th' Harpe, and Melodie:
For whose affection, Lydia, I
(So Fate spares her) am well content to die.

LYDIA

My heart now set on fire is
By Ornithes' sonne, young Calais;
For whose commutuall flames here I
(To save his life) twice am content to die.

HORACE

Say our first loves we sho'd revoke,
And sever'd, joyne in brazen yoke:
Admit I Chloe put away,
And love again love-cast-off Lydia?

LYDIA

Though mine be brighter than the Star;
Thou lighter than the Cork by far;

Rough as th' Adratick sea, yet I
Will live with thee, or else for thee will die.

To a Wine Jar

TWIN-BORN with me in Manlius' year,
O thou who bringest men good cheer,
Or grief or brawl or passions wild,
Or easy sleep, my pitcher mild;

Whate'er thy end, 'tis meet to call
Thy Massic to our festival;
Come down—it is Corvinus' whim:
I need my ripest wines for him.

Deep-dyed in Plato's lore is he,
But not too stern to relish thee;
Why, good old Cato, so they tell,
Would warm unto his wine right well.

Thou hast a gentle rack to strain
The stiffest wits: to thee are plain
The sage's cares and secret thoughts
By grace of Him that loosens knots.

Reviving hope to anxious minds,
Thou givest horns of strength to hinds
Who, filled with thee, no longer pale
At crested kings or men in mail.

May Bacchus and the Graces still
Close-linked, and Venus if she will,
Prolong thy rounds neath lantern gay
Till flee the stars at dawn of day.

The Curse of Wealth

Though India's virgin mine,
And hoarded wealth of Araby be thine,
Though thy wave-circled palaces
Usurp the Tyrrhene and Apulian seas;
When on thy devoted head
The iron band of Fate has laid
The symbols of eternal doom,
What power shall loose the fetters of the dead?
What hope dispel the terrors of the tomb?

Happier the nomad tribe whose wains
Drag their rude huts o'er Scythian plains;
Happier the Getan horde
To whom unmeasured fields afford
Abundant harvests, pastures free:
For one short year they toil;
They claim once more their liberty,
And yield to other hands the unexhausted soil.

The tender-hearted step-dame there
Nurtures with all a mother's care
The orphan babe: no wealthy bride
Insults her lord, or yields her heart
To the sleek suitor's glozing art.
The maiden's dower is purity,
Her parents' worth, her womanly pride,
To hate the sin, to scorn the lie,
Chastely to live, or, if dishonored, die.

Breathes there a patriot brave and strong
Would right his erring country's wrong,
Would heal her wounds and quell her rage?
Let him with noble daring first

Curb Faction's tyranny accurst!
So may some future age
'Grave on his bust with pious hand
"The father of his native land":
Virtue yet living we despise,
Adore it lost, and vanished from our eyes.

Cease, idle wail!
The sin unpunished, what can sighs avail?
How vain the laws by man ordained
If Virtue's law be unsustained!
A second sin is yours! The sand
Of Araby, Gaetulia's sun-scorched land,
The desolate realms of Hyperborean ice,
Call with one voice to wrinkled Avarice:
He hears; he fears nor toil, nor sword, nor sea,
He shrinks from no disgrace but virtuous poverty.

Forth! mid a shouting nation bring
Your precious gems, your wealth untold;
Into the seas, or Temple, fling
Your vile unprofitable gold.
Romans! Repent, and from within
Eradicate your darling sin;
Repent! and from your bosom tear
The sordid shame that festers there.
Bid your degenerate boys to learn
In rougher schools a lesson stern.

The high-born youth mature in vice
Pursues his vain and reckless course,
Rolls the Greek hoop, or throws the dice,
But shuns the chase, and dreads the horse;
This perjured sire, with jealous care,
Heaps riches for his worthless heir;
Despised, disgraced, supremely blest,
Cheating his partner, friend, and guest.

Uncounted stores his bursting coffers fill,
But something unpossessed is ever wanting still.

The Snows Are Fled

THE SNOWS are fled away, leaves on the shaws
And grasses in the mead renew their birth,
The river to the river-bed withdraws,
And altered is the fashion of the earth.

The Nymphs and Graces three put off their fear
And unapparelled in the woodland play.
The swift hour and the brief prime of the year
Say to the soul, THOU WAST NOT BORN FOR AYE.

Thaw follows frost; hard on the heel of spring
Treads summer sure to die, for hard on hers
Comes autumn with his apples scattering;
Then back to wintertide, when nothing stirs.

But oh, whate'er the sky-led seasons mar,
Moon upon moon rebuilds it with her beams;
Come WE where Tullus and where Ancus are
And good Aeneas, we are dust and dreams.

Torquatus, if the gods in heaven shall add
The morrow to the day, what tongue has told?
Feast then thy heart, for what thy heart has had
The fingers of no heir will ever hold.

When thou descendest once the shades among,
The stern assize and equal judgment o'er,
Not thy long lineage nor thy golden tongue,
No, nor thy righteousness, shall friend thee more.

Night holds Hippolytus the pure of stain,
Diana steads him nothing, he must stay;

And Theseus leaves Pirithous in the chain
The love of comrades cannot take away.

The Simple Life

How HAPPY in his low degree,
How rich in humble poverty, is he,
Who leads a quiet country life!
Discharg'd of business, void of strife,
And from the griping scrivener free.
(Thus, e're the seeds of vice were sown,
Liv'd men in better ages born,
Who plow'd, with oxen of their own,
Their small paternal field of corn.)
Nor trumpets summon him to war
Nor drums disturb his morning sleep,
Nor knows he merchants' gainful care,
Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
The clamours of contentious law,
And court and state, he wisely shuns,
Nor brib'd with hopes, nor dar'd with awe,
To servile salutations runs;
But either to the clasping vine
Does the supporting poplar wed,
Or with his pruning hook disjoin
Unbearing branches from their head,
And grafts more happy in their stead:
Or climbing to a hilly steep,
He views his herds in vales afar,
Or shears his overburden'd sheep,
Or mead for cooling drink prepares
Of virgin honey in the jars.
Or in the now declining year,
When bounteous Autumn rears his head,
He joys to pull the ripen'd pear,
And clustring grapes with purple spread.

The fairest of his fruit he serves,
 Priapus thy rewards:
Sylvanus too his part deserves,
 Whose care the fences guards.
Sometimes beneath an ancient oak,
 Or on the matted grass he lies:
No God of Sleep he need invoke;
 The stream, that o'er the pebbles flies,
 With gentle slumber crowns his eyes.
The wind, that whistles through the sprays,
 Maintains the consort of the song;
And hidden birds, with native lays,
 The golden sleep prolong.
But when the blast of winter blows,
 And hoary frost inverts the year,
Into the naked woods he goes,
 And seeks the tusky boar to rear,
 With well mouth'd hounds and pointed spear.
Or spreads his subtile nets from sight
 With twinkling glasses to betray
The larks that in the meshes light,
 Or makes the fearful hare his prey.
Amidst his harmless easy joys
 No anxious care invades his health,
Nor love his peace of mind destroys,
 Nor wicked avarice of wealth.
But if a chaste and pleasing wife,
To ease the business of his life,
Divides with him his household care,
Such as the Sabine matrons were,
Such as the swift Apulians' bride,
 Sunburnt and swarthy tho' she be,
Will fire for winter nights provide,
 And without noise will oversee
 His children and his family,
And order all things till he come,
Sweaty and overlabour'd, home;

If she in pens his flocks will fold,
 And then produce her dairy store,
With wine to drive away the cold,
 And unbought dainties of the poor;
Not oysters of the Lucrine lake
 My sober appetite wou'd wish,
Nor turbet, or the foreign fish
That rolling tempests overtake,
 And hither waft the costly dish.
Not heathpout, or the rarer bird,
 Which Phasis, or Ionia yields,
More pleasing morsels wou'd afford
 Than the fat olives of my fields;
Than shards or mallows for the pot,
 That keep the loosen'd body sound
Or than the lamb, that falls by lot,
 To the just guardian of my ground.
Amidst these feasts of happy swains,
 The jolly shepherd smiles to see
His flock returning from the plains;
 The farmer is as pleas'd as he,
To view his oxen, sweating smoke,
Bear on their necks the loosen'd yoke:
To look upon his menial crew,
 That sit around his cheerful hearth,
And bodies spent in toil renew
 With wholesome food and country mirth.
This Morecraft said within himself;
 Resolv'd to leave the wicked town;
 And live retir'd upon his own;
He call'd his money in:
 But the prevailing love of pelf
 Soon split him on the former shelf,
And put it out again.

To Tibullus

ALBIUS, in whom my satires find
A candid critic, and a kind,
Do you, while at your country seat,
Some rhyming labors meditate,
That shall in volumned bulk arise,
And even from Cassius bear the prize;
Or saunter through the silent wood,
Musing on what befits the wise and good?
Thou art not form'd of lifeless mould,
With breast inanimate and cold;
To thee the gods a form complete,
To thee the gods a fair estate
In bounty gave, with art to know
How to enjoy what they bestow.
Can a fond nurse one blessing more
Even for her favorite boy implore,
With sense and clear expression bless'd,
Of friendship, honor, health possess'd,
A table, elegantly plain,
And a poetic, easy vein?
By hope inspired, depress'd with fear,
By passion warm'd, perplex'd with care
Believe, that every morning's ray
Hath lighted up the latest day;
Then, if tomorrow's sun be thine,
With double lustre shall it shine.
Such are the maxims I embrace,
And here, in sleek and joyous case,
You'll find, for laughter fitly bred,
A hog by Epicurus fed.

To Maecenas

IF, DEAR Maecenas, versed in classic lore,
To what Cratinus taught in days of yore
Your credence yield, the water-drinker's song,
Cold as his heart, can never flourish long.
From that time forth when Bacchus of his grace
Amid the Fauns and Satyrs deign'd to place
True poets as possest, the dulcet Nine
Have every morn, 'tis whisper'd, smelt of wine.
The praise, which father Homer oft bestows
On brimming goblets, proves he loved his dose.
Ennius ne'er pour'd the war song, till his soul
Had suck'd inspiring rapture from the bowl.
"That sober folks turn poets, Heav'n forefend!
"Such to the courts and Libo's Font I send."
This edict past, our wits without delay
Tope wine by night and breathe its fumes by day.
Strange notion! What? If barefoot, with grim frown
And the coarse texture of a scanty gown,
One ape old Cato, would he body forth
All Cato's probity and patriot worth?
The Moor who toiled in rival repartees
To match in powers of tongue Timagenes,
At last a victim to defeated pride,
Bursting with sullen envy, drooped and died.
So, if I look but pale, some ape shall seek
With cummin-dose to bleach his rosy cheek.
Models mislead, when copiers fix their view
On faults alone. How oft, ye servile crew
Of mimics, when your bustling pranks I've seen,
Have ye provoked my smiles—how often my spleen!
Peace to all such! a vacant walk I found,
A bold advent'rer in unbeaten ground.
Let cowards lag behind! The brave explore

New paths, and rush where foot ne'er trod before.
I first held forth to Latium's fond regard
The stern Iambics of the Parian bard,
Copying his verse—his spirit, not each thought
And phrase with death to poor Lycambes fraught.
Nor thou with scantier wreath my brows array,
As loth to change the structure of his lay:
A verse in which warm Sappho urged her suit,
To which Alcaeus tuned his warbling lute,
Albeit, distinct in manner and in style,
In tart lampoons he studies to revile
No perjured sire-in-law, with keen abuse
Weaves for no false betrothed the fatal noose.
His song to Roman ears by me alone—
By me the Latian minstrel—was made known;
Proud that those lays are conned (unseen before)
By liberal eyes, by liberal hands turn'd o'er.
Ask you why some at home my page applaud,
Yet cry it down ungraciously abroad?
I coax no fickle rabble for their votes
With bribes of tempting treat and cast off coats;
I brook to hear no noble bards rehearse,
That they in turn may deign to hear my verse;
I court no desk—no pedant-tribes caress;
And hence—hence flow those tears of bitterness
If I aver my shame, with modest look,
To spout in crowded theatres a book
Whose claim to notice is so poor, and swear
I blush to publish trifles light as air.
Their answer is, "Pshaw, Horace! now you jeer
And keep those dainties back for Jove's own ear,
Vainly convinced (if truth be told) that few
Can pour such nectared streams of song as you!"
At this to sneer outright my courage fails;
So, rather than encounter desperate nails,
"Let's waive that tender topic!" I exclaim,
And crave a truce; for oft has this mock-game

To dudgeon led and bickering broils, and they
To furious conflict and the bloody fray.

On Wealth

How COME, Maecenas, none contentedly
Mind their own business, whether it may be
Given by choice or chance to come their ways?
The other fellow's job gets all the praise,
"These merchants are in luck," the soldier swears,
With shattered limbs from hard laborious years.
The merchant is contrarious in mind,
His vessel tossed about by southern wind:
"I'd rather be a soldier; yes indeed;
The hour is come to charge. The moments lead
To sudden death or joyous victory."
The farmer is extolled by such as be
Trained in the law's procedure, even more
At cockcrow, when the client storms the door.
The country man, enjoined to come to town,
To certify his bond with money down,
Exclaims that only those are really well
Off, who inside the city limits dwell.
And many another I might mention thus,
Enough to bore loquacious Fabius.
To cut it short, no longer to delay,
Listen, here is the point. Some god might say:
"Well, here I am; and what you like to be
I'll make you. What you want, you'll get from me.
Old soldier, you can be a merchant now;
And jurisconsult, you can drive the plow;
Get going: Each one take the other's part.
Hey! hey! Still sticking round?" They will not start
To do the very thing they said they had at heart.
Jupiter's right, when he puffs out both cheeks,
And in his indignation, thus he speaks:

"Never again shall I so easy be.
To lend my ear to such a votary."
Moreover I will not the time beguile
With wisecracks, though they often are worthwhile.
What is the harm to tell truth with a smile?
As teachers with ingratiating ease
Give biscuits to the boys for A. B. C.'s.
Nevertheless, we'll put aside our play
And take the question in a serious way.
The man who turns hard ground with plow as hard,
Mine host, who cheats you out of his reward,
The soldier, and the sailors who must be
Reckless enough to run through every sea,
Say they will stand for work, with this in mind;
When they grow old, they safely leave behind
Their toil for rations in an ample hoard.
The little ant example may afford,
Who with great labor carries in her jaws
Whatever she can get of hips and haws,
And shrewd and provident for what may come,
Adds to her pile and swells her store at home.
But when upon the turning of the year,
With sad Aquarius the heavens are blear,
No more she will creep out, for she is wise;
And what she sought, she then may utilize.
But you from gain no scorching summer day
Can stop. Fire, sea, nor sword will block your way,
While some one else more coin has in hold.
What use, a mighty weight of silver and gold
If furtively afraid to be so rich,
You put it on deposit in a ditch?
"But when you break it up, your pile is spent,
And what is left will not be worth a cent."
Even if you don't, why is your pile so fine?
Your stomach cannot hold more food than mine
Although your threshing floor treads out in wheat
A hundred thousand barrels fit to eat.

If in a slave gang, you went out for sale,
And laden was your shoulder with a bale
Of bread, you'll get no more upon the road
Than one who carried nothing of your load.
Really it is no different for a man
Who lives within the bound of Nature's plan
Whether he plows a hundred acres, or
A thousand. "But a comfortable store
Is sweet to draw from." Now if, by your leave,
From our small pantries we are to receive
An equal share, what is there more to prize
In yours, that comes from bursting granaries?
If you need water only for a jug
To fill, or just enough to fill a mug,
Why say: "I much prefer my drop to bring
From a great river rather than a spring?"
So will it come to all who take delight
In more abundance than is just and right.
Fierce Aufidus tears off his banks and they
And these together, all are swept away.
But any man who moderation heeds,
And only craves the little that he needs,
Will never draw up water mixed with mud,
Nor send his life away upon the flood.

But mostly men, deceived by false desire,
Remark, "It's not enough which you require.
You're just as much as what you have," they say.
What can you do with folks that talk that way?
Tell them where they get off, and let them be
Unhappy. Let them hug their misery.
Like an Athenian, so the story goes,
Lousy with money, who turned up his nose
At public disapproval. "People hiss
Me. I myself applaud myself for this,
When I my safety box have opened wide
To contemplate my money that's inside."

Tantalus tried to capture in his drouth
A river always flying from his mouth.
Why laugh? Change round the name and when you're through
You'll find the story can be told on you.
At money bags you've piled up everywhere,
You gape; you go to sleep on them right there;
So sacred are they, that you now command
Yourself to lay on them no impious hand;
On them you still must fix your gloating gaze
As one whom picture paintings might amaze.
Why, don't you know what money's all about,
And what's the use of it, to put it out?
It buys you bread and cabbages and wine
And other things without which humans pine
If they can't get them. But by day and night
Scared in your soul, to tremble with affright
At big bad thieves or fire or slaves that they
Will loot your hoard before they run away,
Is that so nice and helpful? As for me,
From goods like these, I more than poor would be.
"But if your body's racked with sudden chills
Or you are fixed in bed with other ills,
You'll have a nurse the poultice to prepare
And call the doctor in to cure you there,
So he can give you with his medications
Back to your children and your dear relations?"
Not much! your wife won't want you to get well;
Your son will say that you can go to hell;
For all your neighbors, everyone you know,
Even the boys and girls, they hate you so.
No wonder they grow hot under the collar,
Above them all you put the silver dollar.
Who of them all would offer so to serve
You with affection which you don't deserve?
Or if a kinsman, Nature freely gave,
Or kindly Friendship, you would keep and save,

Poor fool, whose money is your guiding star,
Why lose your labor being what you are,
As if a jackass anybody trains
To run along a racetrack with the reins?
So then, there ought to be a limit set
To money-chasing. For the more you get
The less you'll be afraid of going in
The red. Enjoy your profit and begin
To wind up your affairs. Don't make a fuss
Over them, like the man Ummidius.
The story won't be long. The fellow had
Barrels of money; but his clothes were bad.
He dressed as dirtily as any slave;
And always worried, even to his grave,
That overcome at last with penury
He would be sunk. A girl he had made free
Was brave as Clytemnestra through and through;
She with her hatchet split him right in two.
"Well, what's your argument? Like Naevius
To lead my life, or like Nomentanus?"
How you run on! You pit each opposite
Against the other in a headlong fight.
Because I tell you not to spare each crumb,
You need not be a washout or a bum.
'Twixt Tanais and Visellius' father-in-law
There is a medium from whence to draw
Reason—determined bounds on either hand—
Inside or out the right can never stand.
And so from where I wandered, I return.
There is no tightwad who can ever learn
Self-approbation; who would rather not
Prefer the job the other fellow's got;
All folded up with envy, the poor shoat,
Because another fellow has a goat
With bigger udder than his own will bear.
So with the poor men's crowd, he'll not compare
Himself; but this or that one he will see

Who seems a little better off than he
And try to distance these and win the cup;
Always the richer man will speed him up.
As when the hoofbeats, galloping apace,
Speed up the chariot's starting in the race,
Close pressing those in front the charioteer
Don't give a damn for who brings up the rear.
But rarely we shall find a man who says
That he has lived contented with his days,
Retiring from his life, a well-fed guest
Who after dinner hies him to his rest.
But now's enough. You'd think I undertook
To plagiarize Crispinus' cockeyed book,
The stoic doggerel of a blinking bore.
And after that, I'll add not one word more.

The Women

THE GYPSY women's league that none can rape,
Clown, fakir, beggar and showgirl hang out crape.
Tigellius, their bard, is underground,
For all that crowd he threw the money round.
By contrast, here's a man who, above all
Afraid he may be called a prodigal,
From any needy friend would help withhold
To keep away stark hunger or the cold.
But if you ask another fellow why
Down red lane he makes the money fly,
His proud ancestral fortune all run through
With loans for fol-de-rols on his menu,
He answers, he'll not be considered blinded
By avarice; he'll not be narrow-minded.
For this may some commend him; others blame.
Fufidius, afraid to get the name
Of waster, rich in land, and even more
In principal that hefty interest bore,

Five times the regular profit he would shave
From any sum he for a loan outgave,
Preliminary discount from the fund.
The more you lost, the harder you got dunned.
Even a boy who just had come of age
To wear the manly toga, he would page
If pater were supposedly severe.
Who would not say, "Good God!" such things to hear?
"From such a profit, much can be expended."
You'd hardly think how little he befriended
Himself. Once Terence put upon the stage
An old man's expiation for curst rage
Against a son cast out and gone to sea;
That father used himself no worse than he.
Now if you ask me what it's all about,
It's this way. From a vice some fools get out,
Then to the opposite make haste to go.
Maltinus ambles, tunic trailing low;
Another gentleman, fine as fine can be
So highly tucked, his talliwag you see.
Rufillus chews up scent; and all may note
His smell; Gargonius is like a goat.
There is no happy medium. Some will not
Touch any woman, if she has not got
A gown whose flounces cover up her heels.
Another for a girl no passion feels
Who will not in a stinking brothel stand.
For an acquaintance coming out: "How grand!"
Was Cato's venerable opinion.
"Young man, what you have done, was nobly done!
When with base lust, the arrant vein must swell,
Go to a fancy house, and you'll do well.
You'll find the girls all ready for your use,
And other people's wives you'll not seduce."
For Cupiennius that would never go.
"I'll say I'll not be recommended so."
He likes a quoniam dolled up in white.

Only a lady gives him true delight.
It's worth your while, if you don't like to see
Mankind successful in adultery,
To listen how their labors come to grief,
What risk they run for pleasures rare and brief,
Wholly corrupted by most cruel woes.
One man jumps off a roof and down he goes;
And one is whipped to death; and one in flight
Falls among thieves, who do not treat him right;
One paying cash to keep himself intact;
One pizzled on by scullions for his act;
Occasionally, with iron it befalls
That someone gleans a lively tail and balls.
All vote that such is lawful punishment,
Only Judge Galba ruling in dissent.

But there's another class and safer too
For all who would that kind of business do,
These lovely ladies of a low degree;
With such Sallustius made more than free,
Crazy as one who would commit adultery.
If only modest bargains he had made
Within his means as Reason would persuade
Prudently liberal he could pay his pet
As much as any girl would want to get,
More than enough for him to save his face
And not involve his ruin and disgrace.
Oh! no! He hugged himself for this alone
With amative and laudatory tone:
"I never took another fellow's wife;
I never touched a matron in my life."
Marsaeus, taken with Origo's charm,
Gave to the showgirl country house and farm.
"Other men's wives will never do for me,"
He said. It may be true, in company
With showgirls and paid women of ill fame
You need not lose much more than your good name.

Is it enough a lecher's role to shun
And not the actual deed that he has done?
A damaged reputation's not so good
Nor rich inheritance stuck in the mud.
What then would be the difference any more
In sinning with a matron or a whore?
Villius was taken in by Fausta's name
And thus betrayed to very open shame.
The people called him Sulla's son-in-law.
For him, alas, alack, the deal was raw;
He paid the piper more than was enough;
With fist and iron he first was treated rough
And then kicked out of doors, while high and wide
And handsome, Longarenus rode inside.
Well might John Thomas to his owner say,
Seeing how much hard luck had come their way,
"What's biting you? I don't require a quiff
With consular connections, when I'm stiff.
I don't think much of any robe of rank.
For all you've got, you have yourself to thank."
What could he say? "A daughter I prefer
With popper in the social register."
Teeming with all the wealth that in her lies,
Oh, how much better Nature could advise
Foursquare against your words in open fight
If only you will guide yourself aright,
And do not mess up everything you ought
To shun, with everything that should be sought.
Is there no difference if your troubles rise
From force of circumstance or from your vice?
Don't chase the matrons or you will be sorry;
The only fruits you pluck are toil and worry.

With emeralds green and snowy pearls encased,
A matron may be to Cerinthus' taste;
But is for this her thigh more delicate,
And is her leg more shapely and more straight?

Why very frequently you'll find a frail
Who'll show you better goods put up for sale.
Moreover all she has, without disguise
You'll see, her charms laid bare before your eyes,
Right in the showcase, very fair and plain.
For hidden blemishes, you'll look in vain.
It is the custom of the rich and great,
When trading for a horse in royal state,
To look it over covered, so that they
At first inspection shall not go astray;
So from a handsome shape they'll hold aloof
If propped up from below with a soft hoof;
So gaping buyers need not be misled
With a fine haunch, arched neck or little head.
All well and good. But do not try to trace
With Lynceus' eyes a lovely form and face
While blinder than Hypsaea you shall be
To all the faults that anyone may see.
"What arms and legs!" you cry. But bear in mind
The huge proboscis and the lank behind;
And don't ignore what patently is wrong,
The waist that's all too short, the foot too long.
A matron shows you nothing but her face,
The rest, unless she stand in Catia's place,
Her clothes are hiding, whether good or bad;
And you see nothing, though it drives you mad.
As with a rampart compassed round about,
A thousand, thousand things will shut you out,
Pages, beauticians, maids, her palanquin
And female hangers-on of humble mien;
The dress that falls straight to the ankles down;
The long mantilla wrapped about the gown;
While everything conspires to hinder you,
And so prevent an unimpeded view.
As for the other, in her Coan dress,
You hardly see much more than nakedness.
Club foot nor crooked leg can hidden lie.

You measure out her figure with your eye.
Why had you rather by a cheat get done
Before you see the value of your mon?
"The hunter when the skies are overcast
And snow lies deep, will brave the wintry blast
To trail the game and track it to its lair.
But never will he touch a sitting hare."
So sings the poet; so his measures move
To application: "Thus it is with Love.
All in his grasp he lightly passes by,
In hot pursuit of what will farthest fly."
With these small verses, would you hope in vain
To drive away the passion and the pain,
The raging heat that will not let you rest,
And all the cares that weigh down on your breast?
Ah! would it not be better to inquire
What Nature sets for medium of desire,
What possible fulfilment can be tried,
And what must be, though painfully denied?
Sever the solid good from empty show.
When thirst burns up your jaws, who then would go
After a cup of gold? With hunger's need
Gripped, would you only on a peacock feed
Or turbot? Would you then fastidious turn
From all the other food you might discern?
Or when your passion swells, would you pass by
A pretty slave who gives you the glad eye?
Wouldn't you rather your attentions thrust
On her, than leave your dynamo to bust?
I would. With giddy girls when I'd be mating,
I'd like them easy and accommodating.
The kind who say "A little later on,"
"I want more money," "When my husband's gone,"
In Philodemus' words, are only meant
For Gallic priests who must be continent.
The girl I choose, must never come too dear
Nor show up late, when I would have her near;

Fair-haired and straight and comely to be seen;
And I would have her tolerably clean.
Bleached blondes who wear high heels, I do not crave.
Let her put on alone what Nature gave.
So side by side, squeezing each other tight,
She on the left and I upon the right,
For me she may indeed be Ilia
Or I will call her my Egeria
Or any other name she may prefer.
I'll never be afraid along with her
Of hubby from the country who may hark
Back. Gates are battered down; the dog will bark;
In all the house that fracas will resound,
While on the chamber door, his fist will pound.
Pale as a ghost, the wife leaps out of bed.
Loud shrieks the maid, she wishes she was dead!
She fears a broken leg; the wife for pelf
Her dowry brought; and I for just myself.
I run away half dressed, without my shoes;
For otherwise my money I shall lose
Or ruin my behind and my good name.
And capture is a miserable shame.
That plea, if made in court, you cannot beat,
Even with Fabius on the judgment seat.

The Poet's Father

Of all the dwellers on Etruscan ground
For somewhat Lydian ancestry renowned,
Maecenas, if we give to each his due,
There is no greater gentleman than you.
Though on maternal and paternal side
Your grandsires mighty legions used to guide,
Unlike the common run, a squinnied nose
You never will turn up at any of those
Whose forebears were unknown, nor even at me

Born of a father who had been set free.
A man must be freeborn, but otherwise
You don't go in for genealogies;
And what his father was, won't interest you.
You'll therefore be convinced that this is true;
Long years before the distant day and hour
When Tullius had come to regal power
Whose mother was a slave of low degree,
Many a man without much ancestry,
Leading a life of probity and worth,
Won ample honors, that belied his birth.
Laevinus, on the other hand, come down
From that Valerius of old renown
Who banished from the realm, Tarquin the Proud,
Could never, as the many have allowed,
Be any more expensive than one cent.
Voters, you know, are not intelligent.
Honors they give to men who have no merit,
The servile fools of halfwits who inherit
Titles, or whose patrician galleries
Are lined with forebears' waxen effigies.
What part is proper then for us to play,
From all the vulgar herd so far away?
Only suppose the populace prefer
Such honors on Laevinus to confer
While Decius, the parvenu, they flout.
Suppose the censor moved to kick me out,
And I must be held up to public scorn
Because I had a father not freeborn.
I'd sure deserve the jam that I got in,
Not staying put inside of my own skin.
Forever chained to Glory's glittering car
Alike the vulgar and the nobles are.
So Tillius, what's the use, when yesterday
Your senatorial stripe was torn away,
To seek a tribune's office to attain,
So you can wear the purple once again?

Malicious envy only grows more rife,
Much less, if you retired to private life.
Who wants to stand in senatorial shoes
Is crazy; that will be his sole excuse,
When with black leather thongs his legs are dressed,
And broad the stripe let down upon his chest;
Continually he'll hear: "Who is that man?
Who was his father?" Barrus once began
To be infected with a strange disease;
And with a splendid shape desired to please.
Wherever he went the girls would then and there
Look over all his points with interest rare,
And ask about his face, calves, feet and teeth and hair.
So if a man will make a promise to
The voters, of big things that he will do
For City, Empire, Italy and the shrine
Of every god the Romans hold divine,
Those mortals all are bound to ask with care:
"Who was his father? Was the lady fair
Who bore him, flesh of flesh and bone of bone,
A woman no one else had ever known?
How dare you, son of a Syrus or a Damas
Or of a Dionysus, so to shame us?
Would you a Roman citizen throw down
From the Tarpeian Rock, you base born clown?
Or hand to Cadmus to be executed?"
"But Novius, my colleague so reputed,
Must park one seat behind me, when we see
The games. He's what my father used to be."
"And so you think yourself on this account
A Paulus or Messalla? What do you amount
To anyway? But he's the people's choice.
Novius has a mighty speaking voice.
For when two hundred trucks make an infernal noise,
And three large funerals come to swell the sound
In the great Forum, louder he'll resound;
Trumpets and horns alike his voice will drown.

Anyway, we're not going to let him down."
So now I will return again to me,
"Born of a father who had been set free."
Like rats they gnaw me, every slanderous knave,
"Born of a father who had been a slave."
And that's the way they now behave to me,
Maecenas, when we both good comrades be;
And that's the same old argument they made
Because a Roman legion once obeyed
Me for a Colonel, maybe rightly then;
But now I'll say it's something else again.
My former honor, all the world agrees
Could give a grouch to anyone you please.
But why should anyone be jealous now
Of you and me as friends; they must know how
Particular you are in making friends
Only of those with worthy aims and ends;
All base and crooked flattery is far
From you, who pick your friends for what they are.
So for our friendship, I could never say
Only a stroke of luck had come my way.
No happy chance bestowed you upon me,
But Virgil once, and best of all was he.
After him Varius; so it came to pass
When they had told you everything I was.
But when I came before you, face to face,
I hemmed and hawed, much to my own disgrace.
Like a small infant bashfully I came,
And more I could not say for very shame.
Not I a father's fame inherited;
I never rode upon a thoroughbred
Across the Satureian countryside;
I told you what I was; and you replied
Little, for that's your way; and off I pack.
And when nine months went by, you called me back,
And bade me to be numbered with your friends;
And this, I reckon, all the rest transcends.

That I should be found pleasing in your sight,
With your discernment of the wrong and right.
Me no paternal honors recommend;
But pure in life and heart, I am your friend.
And if my blemishes are slight and few,
But otherwise I'm naturally true,
As for a body shapely on the whole,
You might pick flaws, if spotted by a mole,
If none could really blame me to my hurt
For greed or any other kind of dirt,
If to a fancy house I never went,
But all my life was pure and innocent,
If I do say so, and to friends endeared,
My father was the reason. So he reared
Me. Poor he was. His paltry little field
Could scarcely a sufficient harvest yield;
Yet he refused to put me in the rule
Of Flavius, who ran the village school;
Where boys of big centurions used to go.
Big husky boys; who carried to and fro
On the left arm, the satchel and the slate.
The middle of each month, they shelled out eight
Coppers for payment. But my father dared
To bring his boy to Rome to be prepared,
A training any senator or knight
Would give his sons, if they were taught aright.
My dress, the slaves who followed me about,
If one could notice me in all that rout,
He'd think the pomp and circumstance was due
Alone to large ancestral revenue.
Father himself acted as bodyguard,
Not to be bribed by any man's reward.
He went to my instructors every day
About the school. There is no more to say.
Honorably my father saved for me
The flower of all the virtues, chastity,
Not only in the fact but in the name.

On me no breath of scandal ever came;
He never was afraid of anyone
Who told him he did wrong to give his son
A liberal education. Even if I
Earned but an auctioneer's small salary.
Or if a bill collector I'd remain,
As he was once, I never could complain.
For all this now, what praise can I bestow
On him, much greater than the thanks I owe?
Could I of such a father be inclined
Ever to be ashamed, in my right mind?
Some think they're smart, saying they're not to blame
For parents who had neither name nor fame.
I'll not defend myself in any way
Like that; and what I think and what I say
Will nothing have in common with that crowd.
If, after certain years had been allowed,
At Nature's call, we lived them over again
And other parents of a nobler strain
Each could select according to desire,
Whomever his ambition might require,
Such high and haughty honors I'd resign,
Content with what in former days were mine.
The crowd will call me crazy; you, maybe,
Pronounce me sane, when for the like of me
The fasces I refuse, and curule chair,—
Such crushing burdens, all unfit to bear.
If I desired to take a rustic trip
All by myself, I never more could slip
Out of the city. I should have to feed
A train of grooms and thoroughbreds. I'd need
A coach. But now, according to my due
I take a bobtailed mule for retinue.
And way down to Tarentum I can go
With him. My saddle bags will chafe below
His buttocks, while his rider sore must gall
His foreparts. But there's nobody to call

Me stingy, Tillius, as the gossips goad
You when you travel the Tiburtine road.
A praetor very niggardly behaves
Who on a journey only takes five slaves,
To carry for the hour when he would dine
A portable oven and a hamper of wine.
In that and in a thousand other ways,
Your Excellency, I can pass my days
Much more agreeably than you have done.
Whenever I want, I take a walk alone.
I bargain over cabbages and flour;
I ramble round the Circus at the hour
Of evening, where they gyp the people so;
And afterwards around the Forum go;
At fortune teller's booths I show my hand;
And last of all, once more at home I land.
Arrived I sup on scallions, potted pease
And pancakes made of meal and fried in grease;
Three boys will wait on me; a slab of white
Marble upholds two cups of measure right
For mixing of the water and the wine.
An inexpensive saltcellar is mine;
Pitcher and plate to pour libations there,
And both are of Campanian earthenware.
And so to bed, where worry dies aborning.
I need not get up early in the morning
To plead my clients' cases and to see
Marsyas' statue glowering down at me
Inside the Forum; always frowning thus,
His face abhors the junior Novius
Who just behind his back a pawnshop keeps,
Open for business, while the city sleeps.
I'm up at ten to take a little walk,
Or read or write with no disturbing talk.
A rubdown then with olive oil, not that
Stolen from table lamps by nasty Nat;
And when the sun with penetrating rays

Reminds me to the bath to go my ways,
I keep away from Campus and the ball
Game. Afterwards my lunch is very small,
An empty stomach just enough to stay.
And so at home I pass the time away.
Desire for honor and the heavy strife
Of fell ambition cumber not my life;
But cheerfully I live and at my ease.
In such a life there is much more to please
Than if a quaestor grandfather were mine,
And father and my uncle all in line.

The Bore

I STROLLED along the sacred Boulevard
Pondering a wisecrack for its own reward,
All wrapped up in my verses. When there came
A man I really only knew by name
And gripped my hand. "My dear old top," said he,
"How goes it?" "Well enough as now things be.
I trust that everything goes well with you."
And when I turned away, he stuck like glue.
Said I, "There's something else you want with me?"
"You ought to know me better," answered he.
"I'm very highly cultured." "That means more
Than what you let me see of you before."
Desperately I desired to get away;
I hurry up, and then I stand at bay
And in my servant's ear whisper appeals,
While perspiration runs down to my heels.
"Bolanus, you're in luck that you have got
A head that like your temper's, always hot,"
I muttered, while he talked and showed no pity.
He blurbed about the beauties of the city.
And when I answered nothing: "It's hard luck!
I've noticed all along you want to duck;

You can't shake me, you know; I've got you now.
Where are you going? I'll follow anyhow."
"You need not run around in circles so.
The man I'm going to see, you do not know.
He lives across the Tiber a long way,
Near Caesar's gardens and he's sick today."
"Well, well, there's nothing much round here to do
And I am keen. I'll go along with you."
I lower my ears like an ill-tempered ass
Upon whose back the heavy burdens mass.
"If you but knew me well," so he began,
"Varius or Viscus were no better man
For friend of yours. For who could ever be
So quick and copious with his poetry,
Or who can shake a leg in any dance
With sex appeal to melt you with romance?
And when I sing, I never fail to please
Even to the envy of Hermogenes."
Here seemed to be a chance to stop this bother.
"You might catch something. Haven't you a mother
Or relative who needs you safe and sound?"
"Nobody now. I've put them underground."
"God rest their souls! Behold the hour draws near
To finish off with me, for I'm still here.
An aged Sabine sorceress sang a song
For me in other days when I was young.
This lot for me she drew to serve my turn
When she had shaken her prophetic urn.
And now sad fate has overtaken me,
Now the full meaning of the words I see:
'Nor poison nor the sword will put you out
Pneumonia, consumption nor slow gout;
Someday a blatant bore will be your fate.
Avoid him when you come to man's estate.' "
We reached the spot a little after nine
Where Vesta's temple and the court combine.
That morning he's been summoned to the place

And if he didn't appear, he'd lose his case.
"If you like me one little bit," said he,
"Help me this once and come and vouch for me."
"You know where I am going," so said I,
"And damned if I can help you if I try.
I'm the worst witness any ever saw;
I don't know anything about the law."
Said he, "I have my doubts on what to do
Whether I'd better quit the case or you."
"Me, by all means," said I. Said he, "Nay! nay!"
And pronto he proceeds to lead the way.
To match yourself against a champion
Is never easy, and I followed on.
"How do you and Maecenas get along?"
So he began again: "His mind is strong
And very few his intimates must be,
And none has used good luck more dextrously.
Now if a certain man you'd introduce
He'll help you out. You'll find him of great use
Against the rest. I'm damned if you would not
With him along, get rid of the whole lot."
"We do not live there in the kind of way
You seem to think, from what I hear you say.
There is no cleaner house nor any more
Averse to intrigue when you pass the door,"
Said I. "But everybody has his place.
As for myself I count it no disgrace,
If one with coin or brains surpasses me."
"That's great, but hardly credible," said he.
"But that's the way it is." "You make me more
Anxious to get right next him than before."
"You only have to wish and with your pluck
Over the top you'll go with best of luck.
It's more than easy to beat down his guard.
That's why the first approaches are so hard."
"He'll never get me down. His slaves I'll pay
With tips; and if they kick me out today

Tomorrow I'll be back. I'll get him there
Or on the boulevard or public square.
'Naught without toil can Life to mortals lend.' "
While this kept on and on, an intimate friend,
Fuscus Aristius, here hove in sight.
Down to the ground he knew that fellow right.
Both of us stopped to pass the time of day.
"Where are you coming from, and whither away?"
I tried to nab him by the coat. My fist
Only enclosed a very lifeless wrist.
I nod and wink for rescue. All the while
The cutup smiled a most deceptive smile;
That burned me up. "You said most certainly
You'd private matters to discuss with me."
"Yes, I remember. At a fitting season
Will you and I about those matters reason.
Today's Yom Kippur. Even you'd refuse
To thumb the nose at circumcised Jews."
"I'm not a superstitious man," I say,
"Nor share in their beliefs in any way."
"Well, as for me, I'm just a little yellow
About their rites. I'm a peculiar fellow
And all their superstitions I allow.
Another time I'll talk. Excuse me now."
I'll tell the world the sun grew black for me.
That rascal ran away and let me be
Under the knife. The plaintiff in the case
Now came on his opponent face to face.
"O there you are. You miserable cur!
And you, you'll act as witness, my dear sir?"
With right good will I offer him my ear
To touch and as a witness to appear,
The customary sign. As with a claw,
He grips his man in clutches of the law.
There's a great noise and running round about.
And that's the way Apollo helped me out.

City and Country Mouse

THIS was among my prayers, a moderate plot
Of ground—not near so large as what I've got—
A garden, too; and near my roof, a source
Of water running freshly on its course;
And over these a bit of woods might be;
Better by far the gods have done for me.
'Tis well; O Maia's son, no more I'll pray
Except you make this gift my own alway.
If I have never by bad business
Enlarged my store, nor yet will make it less
By folly or neglect; if on my knees
I never made such stupid prayers as these:
"Oh! If that neighbor's corner came to me
That spoils my little farmstead's symmetry!
Oh! If my luck could show in my own ground
Just such a pot of money as was found
Once by a hired man who with his yield
Of treasure bought that land and plowed that field!
Such coin a friendly Hercules had sent."
With what I have I'm happy and content.
Fat cattle are my prayer to you instead,
Everything fat except the owner's head.
Be with me now as you have been of yore;
My steadfast guide and guardian evermore,
When as remote from town up here I dwell
Among the mountains in my citadel.
What first can I illustrate by the use
Of satires and of my pedestrian Muse?
Here fell Ambition cannot do me harm,
Nor leaden Auster here can raise alarm,
Nor dreary Autumn with his guerdon come
For Libitina, goddess of the tomb.
O Father of the Morn, or if you'd rather

Lend me an ear as Janus than as father;
Whence, so it pleased the gods, the race of man
The work and labor of their life began,
Be thou the head and front of all my song.
If I'm at Rome, you make me hurry along
When I go surety for another's bond.
"Hi! never let another man respond
For Duty's call before you. Up and go!"
If Earth is blasted when the north winds blow
Or if the winter Solstice drags the day
In narrow circles on its snow-clad way
I start out just the same; and when I've lost
My cash in clearly worded legal cost,
I have to jostle through the crowd and goad
To injury the loiterers on my road.
"What do you think you're doing, you idiot?
What do you mean? Why do you think you've got
To run down everything that's on your way?"
Curses the irate scoundrel brought to bay;
"You only have Maecenas on your mind,
And back to him you run as you were blind."
That's sweet as honey and I tell no lie.
To the black Esquiline as soon as I
Have come, around me jump a hundred cares
And all of them are other men's affairs.
Right through my head they go, and all around
On every side of me they leap and bound.
"Roscius implores you not to come too late
To meet him at the Puteal at eight
Tomorrow." "Quintus, for the clerks today
There's a big deal that's getting under way.
Remember to come in. It's something new.
And have Maecenas seal these vouchers too."
"I'll try," you say. Says he insistent still:
"You sure can fix it, if you only will."
The seventh year has almost run its date,
And very nearly reaches Number Eight,

During which time Maecenas condescends
To have me in the circle of his friends;
So far as in his carriage when he'll take
Me for a journey he desires to make.
These are the little gems that he sees fit
To give me when he talks: "What time is it?"
Or "Is the Thracian bantam on a par
With Syrus?" or "These frosty mornings are
Liable to bite you, if you don't watch out."
And other things one well might talk about
Were they confided to a sieve-like ear.
And every day and hour of every year
Our little pal for Envy is a mark.
If with the patron at the games he'll park,
Or on the Campus both are playing ball,
"A very child of Fortune!" so say all.
Sometimes a creepy rumor trickling down
Out of the Rostra inundates the town,
And every one I meet inquires of me:
"Dear friend, you are so near the powers that be,
You stand with them so closely; you must know
Whatever may be so, or is not so.
What news about the Dacians?" "There is none
I heard of." "How you'll always have your fun!"
"May every god me damn, if anything
I know about it." "What's the news you bring
Of Caesar and the soldiers' promised land?
Is it Trinacria where he's going to hand
It out, or on our own Italian ground?"
And when I swear that nothing can be found
On me, they look upon me as a freak,
So deeply silent when I ought to speak.
In such, for wretched me the light of day
Is lost, but not without the prayers I say:
"When shall I gaze upon you, rustic bowers,
Now with old books or idle sleepy hours?
When shall I be allowed life's storm and stress

To drown in cups of blest forgetfulness?
O when before me shall be put the bean,
Pythagoras' kin, or well-anointed green
With bacon fat? O nights and feasts divine!
While friends and I before my hearth-god dine.
And when the Lar has got the part he craves,
I feed with what is left, my saucy slaves.
Then just as anybody cares to try,
Flagon or cup alike, the guest drinks dry.
And, subject to no crazy regulations,
One gets outside of mighty strong potations!
Another gets more pleasure, to his thinking,
By tippling at the wine with moderate drinking.
And conversation rises once again,
Not about house and grounds of other men,
Nor whether Lepos dances well or ill;
But conversation that more nearly will
Concern us all, where Ignorance is bad—
Whether mankind a greater blessing had
In riches than in virtue; what will draw
Together friends, interest or moral law;
What is the essence which we goodness call;
And what may be the highest good of all.
Meanwhile our neighbor Cervius will chatter
With old wives' tales for each and every matter.
If one of us the ills of wealth ignored
And praised Arellius and his careful hoard,
"Here's an old story," Cervius would begin.
"To a poor hole, a country mouse took in
A city mouse, old friends in days of yore.
The rugged, thrifty rustic spared his store
And yet he would relax a frugal mind
When he to hospitality inclined.
In short, he did not skimp the choice chick-peas
Nor the long oats; nor in his jaws with these
A raisin all dried up for many a day
Or scrap of bacon nibbled half away;

Desiring to cajole with varied fare
One who for simple diet did not care,
Fastidious, a very proud-toothed mouse.
The father and the master of the house
Stretched out upon a heap of this year's straw
Chewed spelt and darnel, pushing with his paw
Up to his guest the best of all the feast.
Then up and spake the little city beast:
'How can it help you, stubborn to abide
On this sheer slope, right in the woodland wide?
Why will you not the city and citizens
Prefer to the wild trees? Friend, let's go hence!
Believe me, on this earth both beast and man
With mortal souls live an allotted span.
And whether you be big or you be small
From Lethe you shall not escape at all.
Dear comrade, let's live merrily while we may.
Mind ye how brief is each wee creature's day.'
This utterance touched the field mouse to the soul;
Lightly he leapt out of his house and hole.
And both set out, each eager at the fall
Of night to creep under the city wall.
When midnight held the space of Heaven, each mouse
Set stealthy footprints in an affluent house,
Where ivory couches shone with scarlet cover;
From yesterday's great banquet was left over
Course upon course in baskets heaped up high.
On purple vestment stretched out royally
The field mouse by his host was duly placed;
And like a servant girt about the waist
The city mouse each course in order bore;
And like a servant licked each dish before
'Twas served. He on his couch in high estate
Rejoiced at the mutation of his fate
And played the role of guest mid Plenty's store;
Till sudden a loud noise smote at the door.
Each scuttled from his couch, pallid indeed,

And ran through that apartment at full speed
Shaking all over; while the mansion rung
Again as the Molossian hounds gave tongue.
The rustic spake: 'This life's no use to me!
Good night! me for my hole inside the tree,
All nice and safe, with scrubby bean and pea!' "

The Art of Poetry

SUPPOSE some painter, for the whim, should trace
A horse's neck with human head and face,
And limbs from various animals expressed
In plumage of as various hues invest,
So that the same fantastic piece may show
A fair maid upwards, a foul fish below,—
Were you admitted to the motley sight,
Methinks you'd laugh, my friends, and well you might.
Yet not less strange, my Pisos, to the ear
Of sober sense that poem must appear,
Which deals in shapes extravagant and vain,
Wild as the phantoms of a feverish brain;
Where, no two members to one whole referred,
All is grotesque, incongruous, and absurd.
'Painters (you'll say) and bards, the world agrees,
Are privileged to dare what flights they please.'
We own that much is due for license' sake,
And give it freely as we freely take;
But let them stop where nature stops at least,
Nor couple tame with savage, bird with beast.
Poems of high attempt and promise vast
Oft dwindle to a dreary void at last,
With here and there a purple remnant found
Tagged on to throw a tawdry glare around.
Diana's shrine embowered in tufted shades,
With streamlets trickling through the verdant glades,
The stately Rhine, the bow that spans the sky,

By turns, like tinsel trappings, catch the eye.
Not that such themes, well-timed, are void of grace;
They are not bad; but they are out of place.
Say 'tis your knack to draw a cypress-tree—
What then? you're hired to paint a storm at sea
For some wrecked sailor. If the wheel begin
A vase, why starts me up a nipperkin?
In short, to mark this maxim never cease—
Let all you write be one and of a piece.
Dear sire, and offspring worthy of your sire!
We bards are dupes to what ourselves admire.
Would I be brief, I grow confused and coarse;
Who aims at smoothness, fails in fire and force;
In him who soars aloft, bombast is found;
Who fears to face the tempest, crawls aground.
Who courts variety, and fain would ring
A thousand changes on the selfsame string,
Will paint, as 'twere in fancy's wildest mood,
Boars in the wave and dolphins in the wood.
Thus even error, shunned without address,
Breeds error different in its kind, not less.
The meanest hand at sculpture shall not fail
To hit the waving hair or mold a nail,
Yet mars the *tout-ensemble,* since his soul
Lacks energy to grasp a perfect whole.
Genius thus circumscribed, should I aspire
To works of taste, I would no more desire,
Than shock with hideous nose each passer-by,
Praised for my jetty hair and sloe-black eye.
First, ye that write, mark well your proper field;
Let each select some theme which he can wield,
And, ere he tax his shoulders, weigh with care
What freight they can and what they cannot bear.
His pen shall words a ready host attend,
And method light him to his journey's end.
Of method this I deem the pride and grace—
Whate'er is said, to say it in due place,

Much to reserve till apt occasion call,
Take this, leave that, and fitly time it all.
In choice of diction would you be admired,
Nice care and shrewd adroitness is required.
Sometimes a dextrous phrase shall cheat the view,
And lend to well-known words the air of new.
But if need be abstruser thoughts to dress,
And in new terms new notions to express,
We'll grant you now and then to frame a word
Which the high-girt Cethegi never heard;
Nor shall such freedoms, if discreetly used
And taken with reserve, be e'er refused.
But those least shock the ear which trace their course,
With slight deflexion, from a Grecian source.
For say, shall Rome from present bards withhold
A grace so largely lavished on the old?
Shall Virgil or shall Varius be forbid
To do what Plautus or Caecilius did?
If, when a Cato spake or Ennius sung,
They gifted with fresh stores their native tongue,
Must I, a modern, with the power, forbear
To swell the public stock with my poor share?
The poet's right none did—none dare—deny,
To put forth words impressed with recent die.
As Autumn sweeps the grove's green pride away,
The new leaves budding as the old decay,
So words which flaunt their time in vernal bloom
Must fall, and fresh ones flourish in their room.
Alas, proud man! thyself and all that's thine
Soon shed their transient glories and decline.
The labored pier that breaks the baffled tide
And opes a bay where anchored navies ride;—
The moor and watery waste reclaimed, where now
The slow ox drags the fertilizing plough;—
The river taught to spare the ripening grain
And by a safer route to join the main;—
Such are thy noblest works, and such decay;

And shall the shadowy tribes of language stay?
Shall speech alone resist Time's envious tooth,
And live and flourish in perennial youth?
Full many a word, now lost, again shall rise,
And many a word shall droop which now we prize,
As shifting fashion stamps the doom of each,
Sole umpire, arbitress, and guide of speech.
What numbers suit the daring bard who sings
Embattled hosts and kings encountering kings,
Homer has shown.—In couplets short and long
First pensive sorrow poured her plaintive song;
In after-times, although the wish were gained
And tears gave place to smiles, the verse remained;
But elegy's soft lay who first struck out,
Critics still argue and the court's in doubt.—
Rage gave Archilochus a loftier tone,
And armed him with iambics all his own.
These did the sock and these the buskined muse,
As suited to discourse alternate, choose,—
A measure for life's bustling action fit
And towering o'er the thunder of the pit.—
To the bold lyre the favoring Muse has given
To chant the powers and progeny of Heaven,
The champion crowned, the conquering courser's line,
Love's tender cares, and joys of generous wine.
To give each piece its marked specific hue,
Hit the nice shades and keep the coloring true,
If niggard nature feels a task too hard,
Why am I honored with the name of bard?
Why blush to learn, if ignorant, and prefer,
Rather than mend my error, still to err?
The comic scene revolts at being told
In verse of tragic texture strong and bold;
Nor less Thyestes' horrid feast disdains
The sock's light chit-chat and colloquial strains.
Let but each style enjoy its proper place,
Each shall appear with dignity and grace.

Yet Comedy at times her voice can raise,
And wrathful Chremes rails in swelling phrase.
The tragic hero too, subdued by woes,
Stoops from his height to wail in homely prose:
Peleus and Telephus, forlorn and poor,
Spout their loud fustian and big words no more,
Would they one throb of sympathy impart,
And touch with kindred pangs the hearer's heart.
'Tis not enough that poetry combine
All fancy's charms in every sounding line;
Impassioned let her be, and melt at will
The soul to pity, or with horror thrill.
From face to face as smiles contagious creep,
So weeps the according eye with those that weep;
Who claims my tears, must first display his own,
Then shall I catch his pangs and share his moan.
But if ye rant as if no grief were nigh,
If in your speech your sufferings ye belie,
Ye exiled heroes! maugre all your woes,
'Tis ten to one I either laugh or doze.
Sad words befit the brow with grief o'erhung;
Anger, that fires the eyeball, bids the tongue
Breathe proud defiance; sportive jest and jeer
Become the gay; grave maxims the severe.
For nature, working in our nice machine,
First molds the passions to life's fitful scene,
Gladdens, or goads to wrath, or, fraught with care,
Drags down to earth and wings us with despair;
Anon a herald in the tongue she finds
Prompt to proclaim each movement of our minds.
But if the actor play not to the life,
If with his words his fortunes seem at strife,
Him knights and commons, horse and foot, shall scoff,
And tittering thousands hoot the blunderer off.
Each speaker let his speech characterize:
For sure a broad and glaring difference lies,
Whether a god or hero mount the stage;

The brisk young spark or man mature in age;
The dame of rank or nurse of prattling vein;
The wandering seaman or the peaceful swain;
One that Assyria or that Colchis fed;
He that at Argos or at Thebes was bred.
In painting characters, or follow fame,
Or keep your fancy-piece throughout the same.
If haply to the stage you summon back
Great Peleus' son, adhere to Homer's track:
Proud, stern, relentless, brave, the hero draw,
His title conquest, and the sword his law.
Fierce be Medea and untamed by ill;
Ixion treacherous and ungrateful still;
Ino a mourner o'er her slaughtered child;
Io an outcast; and Orestes wild.
But if you dare to launch upon the stage
Originals that ne'er graced poet's page,
Let them one tenor to the last pursue,
Consist throughout and to themselves be true.
With truth's discriminating traits to fill
A general outline, asks no vulgar skill;
And safer shall the bard his pen employ,
With yore, to dramatize the Tale of Troy,
Than, venturing trackless regions to explore,
Delineate characters untouched before.
Yet here and there the public ground shall yield
Of private property an ample field,
If neither in the trite routine you plod,
There only treading where the rest have trod,
Nor word for word with servile care translate,
Nor, closely copying, leap into a strait
Whence fear of shame and your own rule to boot
Forbid you to release your tangled foot.
Profess not with the Cyclic bard to sing
'Of Ilium's far-famed war and hapless king.'
What are this boaster's proud pretensions worth?
The mountain teems, and gives a titmouse birth!

Mark with what simple majesty the strain
Of him begins who never vaunts in vain—
'Sing, Muse! the man who, when Troy's bulwarks fell,
Trod various realms and marked their manners well.'
With him no transient blaze in smoke expires,
But from the smoke burst forth abiding fires,
From which, as fancy works, new wonders rise
To flash amazement on the ravished eyes,—
Antiphates, Charybdis' howling wave,
The dogs of Scylla, and the Cyclops' cave.
Nor does he run his subject out of breath
In dry detail from Meleager's death
To Diomed's return; nor yet begins
The Trojan war from Leda and her twins;
But posting onwards, brooking no delay,
To the mid-theme he boldly bursts his way.
Much he anticipates as if 'twere known;
Much that he feels would tire he lets alone;
And so adroitly mingles false with true,
So with his fair illusions cheats the view,
That all the parts—beginning, middle, end—
In one harmonious compound sweetly blend.
 Hear now what I and all the town demands,
If you would have your audience clap their hands,
In patience seated till the curtain draws
And the last speaker bows and begs applause.
Mark in each stage of life how nature veers,
The temper varying with the varying years.
What time the tongue has mastered every sound,
And steadier footsteps learn to print the ground,
Behold the schoolboy frolicsome and gay
Scampering to join his comrades at their play,
Vexed for a straw, but soothed as soon as vexed,
In tears this moment and in smiles the next.
The beardless youth, his freedom proud to gain,
Loves horses, hounds, and Mars's sunny plain;
Ductile as wax to vice his yielding soul,

Deaf to the warning voice of dull control,
Profuse of purse, impatient of delay,
Taking no thought but for the present day,
Of lofty spirit, of affections strong,
Pleased with what's new, but pleased with nothing long.
Shifting his views, see riper manhood crave
Place, power, and patronage,—ambition's slave;
Wary betimes each oversight to shun,
And slow to do what he may wish undone.
A thousand ills declining age attend,
Still brooding o'er its bags, still loath to spend,
In counsel cold, and tardy to decide,
In thrifty forecast placing all its pride;
Full of prospective bliss and present pain,
Suspicious and splenetic, fretful, vain;
Loud in the praises of the good old times,
And croaking stern rebuke on modern crimes.
Thus, as life's seasons in succession flow,
Our tempers change, our passions come and go.
Beware then in youth's portrait to employ
The tints of age, nor mingle man with boy;
To every period with precision give
Its proper cast, and bid your picture live.
All facts which in the fable have a share
Pass on the stage,—or are recorded there.
Those which a tale shall through the ear impart
With fainter characters impress the heart
Than those which, subject to the eye's broad gaze,
The pleased spectator to himself conveys.
Yet drag not on the stage each horrid scene,
Nor shock the sight with what should pass within.
This let description's milder medium show,
And leave to eloquence her tale of woe.
Let not the cruel Colchian mother slay
Her smiling infants in the face of day;
Nor Atreus crown the board with impious food,
And feast a brother with congenial blood;

Nor Procne's form the rising plumage take;
Nor Cadmus sink into a slimy snake.
Much that were only passing strange if heard,
When seen, revolted sense declares absurd.
To five acts lengthened be the piece, not more,
That asks the long applause and loud encore;
Nor in the unraveling be a god displayed,
Save where the knot disdains all humbler aid;
Nor in distracting dialogue engage
At once four speakers on the crowded stage.
The Chorus should an actor's part sustain,
Join in the busy scene nor join in vain;
Nor chant between the acts what does not tend
To aid the theme and with the action blend.
A ready patron still on virtue's side,
With friendly love her votaries let it guide,
Greet those who fear to swerve from duty's path,
And curb with bold rebuke revenge and wrath;
Let it the tribute of its praise afford
To sober diet and the simple board;
Espouse fair justice, the support of states,
Law's righteous sword, and peace with open gates;
Hold fast the secret trusted to its care;
And to the gods put up a fervent prayer
That fickle Fortune may at their behest
Turn from the oppressor to relieve the oppressed.
The pipe in days of yore, not brazen-bound
As now, nor rivaling the trumpet's sound,
But of few stops and slender compass, still
Served to support the Chorus, and to fill
A narrow line of seats that with no crowd
Of countless hearers hitherto o'erflowed—
Seats, where a people thin in numbers yet,
Decent and chaste and plain and frugal, met.
But when by war the realm was wider grown,
And walls of ampler circuit girt the town;
When, on a day of revels, to begin

The feast from noontide was no more a sin,
A larger license and a scope less rude
Both to the music and the verse accrued.
For what should that mixed audience have of taste,
Clown grouped with cit, and boors by nobles placed?
Thus did the piper superadd erelong
The charms of gesture to the powers of song,
With pantomimic grace his sense expressed,
And trailed along the boards the floating vest.
Thus too, its tones increased, the lyre severe
Poured richer warblings on the ravished ear;
The muse in loftier numbers learned to soar,
Imped her bold plume for flights untried before,
And, fraught with fire prophetic, bade each line
Rival the raptures of the Delphian shrine.
He that in tragic lay late strained his throat
To win the paltry prize—a shaggy goat,
Soon bared upon the stage a sylvan crew
And brought the wanton satyrs forth to view;
The solemn tone not wholly laid aside,
To humor and burlesque his hand applied;
And sought by grateful novelty of song
To rivet to their seats a boozy throng
From festive rites and revels just set free,
Ripe for loose pranks and full of tipsy glee.
Yet so to shift from grave to gay 'twere fit,
So temper the light satyrs' saucy wit,
That not each god, each hero, that of late
Stalked forth in purple robes and royal state,
Anon should all his pomp of speech let down
To the low slang and gabble of a clown,
Or, steering heavenwards his flight too fast,
Grasp empty clouds and soar into bombast.
The Tragic Muse, with bashfulness severe,
Disdaining the base gibe and trivial jeer,
Will, like a matron whom the priest perchance
Calls at some solemn festival to dance,

Amid the skittish satyrs still be seen
Distinguished by her staid and sober mien.
Were I, my friends, to write satyric plays,
Not wholly to low terms and homely phrase
Would I restrict my pen; nor so refuse
The richer coloring of the tragic muse,
As that no difference should be marked between
What waggish Davus in the comic scene
Or Pythias prates, when in her knavery bold
She bubbles simple Simo of his gold,—
And what Silenus, when he steps abroad
The foster guardian of the nursling god.
Some well-known legend should support my theme;
This with such art I'd trace, that each should deem
He too could match the verse,—then task his brain,
And toiling long confess his efforts vain.
Such merit is to plan and structure due!
To vulgar themes such glory may accrue!
But let the fauns, still mindful what they are,
Fetched from the woods, by my advice beware
(As if at Rome they all their life had led,
Born in our streets and in our Forum bred)
They tattle in a languid, love-sick style,
Or bolt unseemly jests and ribald vile.
For each that boasts birth, rank, and consequence,
At such low trash is apt to take offense,
Nor all with patience hears or deigns to crown
That with the nut-and-gray-pease tribe goes down.
Two syllables, first short, then long, combine
To frame the light iambus; whence the line,
Though to the ear six several beats it bears,
Was surnamed trimeter, and scanned by pairs.
This measure, as its pristine form was cast,
Flows uniformly on from first to last.
But after no long time, to greet the ear
With more majestic grace and weight severe,
The foot, its birthright waived, generous and free,

Took in joint partnership the grave spondee,
One special privilege reserving still—
That every even place itself should fill.
'Not so (says one) march the bold trimeters
Of Accius, Ennius; there it scarce occurs.'
Yet, maugre such high names, that author's page
Who thus with ponderous cadence loads the stage,
Speaks either gross neglect and slovenly haste,
Or ignorance of his art and want of taste.
Not every reader, it is true, has skill
To judge if verse be modulated ill;
And too indulgent Rome has fondly nursed
This laxness in her poets from the first.
But what of that? If readers will be fools,
Must I run riot and despise all rules,
Safe in that fault, forsooth, which, even if seen
By all the world, long use perhaps shall screen?
Poor boast, to say, 'I have escaped from blame,
But after all to praise can urge no claim!'
Your standard then be Greece! Her models bright
By day peruse, and reperuse by night!
Our forefathers, good-natured, easy folks,
Extolled the numbers and enjoyed the jokes
Of Plautus, prompt both these and those to hear
With tolerant—not to say with tasteless—ear;
At least if you and I with sense are blest
To tell a clownish from a courtly jest,
Or, by the finger's aid and ear's to boot,
Can take just measure of a verse and foot.
 Thespis, we're told, the tragic song struck out,
And in rude wagons hawked his plays about;
His corps dramatic, every brow with lees
Of wine besmeared, there sung and acted these.
Next Aeschylus brought on the trailing pall
And visor, reared a stage on platform small,
To strut in buskined pride his actors taught,
And gave big utterance to the manly thought.

The Antique Comedy was next begun,
Nor light applause her frolic freedom won;
But, into slanderous outrage waxing fast,
Called for the curb of law; that law was passed;
And thus, its right of wronging quickly o'er,
Her Chorus sank abashed, to rise no more.
Naught have our venturous poets left untried,
Nor is it in the wreath which crowns their pride
The meanest plume, that many a Roman bard
Spurning the Grecian track, has boldly dared
To chant domestic themes—alike, I trow,
In bordered robe or plain, high life or low.
Nor would the name of Latium stand renowned
On martial more than on Parnassian ground,
Were not our every bard so loth the while
To brook the pause and labor of the file.
Praise you no piece, my noble friends, but what
Has been through many an hour and many a blot
Corrected, ten times poised in judgment's scale,
And smoothed like sculpture to the critic nail!
Because Democritus thinks fit to call
Art nothing-worth, and genius all in all,
And sternly bids each sober muse's son
Renounce the verdant heights of Helicon,
There are in whom a wondrous whim prevails
Neither to trim their beard nor pare their nails;
Where crowded baths invite, they come not nigh,
But to lone caves and silent deserts fly.
For oh! he shines a bard confessed, be sure,
Whose poll (which three Anticyras could not cure)
To barber Licinus was ne'er consigned!
Fool that I am, who, though to verse inclined,
Purge every spring the wit-inspiring bile!
How matchless, but for this, had been my style!
No matter, mine be like the whetstone's aid,
Which, blunt itself, lends sharpness to the blade.
While others practise, precept I'll impart,

And, though no artist, prove a friend to art.
Whence all the bard's resources flow, I'll teach;
What his just functions, and how far they reach;
What kindles and what fans the sacred fire;
What course must train him, and what themes inspire;
What breeds the foul, and what the fair befriends;
And whither fitness, whither failure tends.
 In the philosophy of man to excel
Is the prime root and spring of writing well.
Matter the page Socratic best can show;
That once provided, words will freely flow.
When lore has opened to the poet's view
To country what, and what to friends is due;—
In what just portion man beneath the names
Of parent, brother, host, affection claims;—
To what the senator, the judge, is bound,
Or chief pavilioned high on tented ground;—
Doubt not but he each character shall scan
And shrewdly fit the manners to the man.
Besides, to copy nature to the life,
Go, mark the world, explore its busy strife;
To living scenes for truth's expression look;
There dip your pen, and make mankind your book.
Oft has the play wherein these virtues dwell,
Set off with sentiment and mannered well,
Though else uncouth and rude in every part,
Devoid of strength, wit, elegance, or art,
More charmed an audience, more their hearts surprised,
Than faithless grace and nonsense harmonized.
 Genius to Greece, to Greece the pride of phrase
Heaven gave, of nothing covetous but praise.
Not so our youth, who, cramped by hopeful drilling,
Learn into fifty parts to split one shilling.
Let young Albinus solve the problem sought:
'Take one from five-pence; what results?'—'A groat.'
'Good! you're the boy to thrive! But come, explain,
If added, what?'—'A tester.'—'Good again!'—

Where hearts thus trained to petty pelf we find,
And rust like this has cankered o'er the mind,
Who'd look for finished poems, wrought with toil,
Worthy the cypress case and cedar oil?

To teach—to please—comprise the poet's views,
Or else at once to profit and amuse.
In precept be concise. What thus is told
The mind shall grasp with ease, with firmness hold;
While all that's heaped superfluous shocks the taste,
From memory's tablet fades, and runs to waste.
Let fancy's wild creation, though designed
Less to improve than to amuse the mind,
Copied at least from nature's scene appear,
And to a semblance of the truth adhere,
Nor tax the reader's faith too far, or draw
The breathing infant from the goblin's maw.
Graybeards will damn what fails in useful truth;
Dry commonplace will pall on buxom youth,
But he who precept with amusement blends,
And charms the fancy while the heart he mends,
Wins every suffrage. Rarely shall he miss
To enrich the Sosii with a piece like this;
Seas shall it traverse, and the writer's page
Hand down his glories to a distant age.

Yet there occur in almost every book
Specks which the nicest taste must overlook.
For neither always will the minstrel's lyre
Give back the note his ear and hand require;
He asks a grave, the chord a sharp remits;
The archer aims, the bow not always hits.
If then a poem charm me in the main,
Slight faults I'll not too rigidly arraign,
Which frail humanity has here and there
Let fall from oversight or want of care.
To draw the line, then, thus our case will stand:
As that transcriber who, with pen in hand,
Though warned of lapses past, repeats the same,

With no fair plea can parry off the blame;—
As all would flout the lyrist who should ring
Harsh discord always on the selfsame string;—
Such is to me the ever-blundering bard.
He sinks a Choerilus in my regard,
In whom perceiving haply once awhile
Some casual gleams of wit, I start and smile;
Vexed, on the other hand, if now and then
Short fits of slumber creep on Homer's pen,—
Howbeit at times the noblest bard, I think,
In works of long attempt may fairly wink.
For poems are like pictures: some appear
Best in the distance, others standing near;
This loves the shade, while that the light endures,
Nor shuns the nicest ken of connoisseurs;
This charms for once, and then the charm is o'er,
While that, the more surveyed, still charms the more.
Hear, elder youth! and mark my maxim well
(Though by a father's lessons you excel
In judgment sound, and all his taste inherit):
A middling worth, a modicum of merit
To certain arts the world may well concede.
In court or chamber, this, perhaps, shall plead,
Short of Messala's skill, his client's cause,
That, short of Aulus' depth, expound the laws,
Yet each of use, each in request may be;
Retained, consulted, each may earn his fee.
But of poetic worth a moderate share
Not men, not gods, not booksellers can bear.
As music out of tune at festive board,
Seed-cakes of honey from Sardinia stored,
Or unguents void of scent, each guest displease,
Because the feast might well dispense with these;
So verse, whose office and essential end
Is to delight the soul,—unless it tend
To aid, not mar, the purpose of its birth,
Fails in the balance and is nothing-worth.

He that ne'er joined the lists in Mars's field,
Forbears to take up arms he cannot wield;
He that ne'er pitched the quoit nor tossed the ball
Nor whirled the troque, shuns to contend at all,
Fearing the titter of the crowded ring;—
Yet he sings verse who never learned to sing.
'Why not' (says one), 'of knight's estate secure,
Of liberal birth, fair fame, and morals pure?'
Nought e'er will you, I'm sure, in nature's spite,
(Such is your sense and prudence) speak or write.
But, if at some chance hour you aught compose,
See 'tis correct ere to the world it goes;
Submit it first to Tarpa's critic ears,
Your sire's, and mine; and keep your piece nine years.
What is not published you can blot or burn;
But words, once uttered, never can return.

Orpheus of old, Heaven's prophet and high priest,
Drew from their butcherous coil and wildwood feast
Barbarian hordes, hence fabled to assuage
The tiger's ravin and gaunt lion's rage.
Amphion, too, who reared the Theban towers,
Was said by his soft shell's persuasive powers
To heave the marble fragment from its base
And witch the stones at pleasure to their place.
For in those olden times the sage's art
Was but to circumscribe men's rights, and part
Public from private, sacred from profane,
Protect just wedlock, vagrant lust restrain,
Build rampired towns, engrave their laws on wood,
And knit the bands of social brotherhood.
Thus verse seemed Heaven's own gift in times so rude,
And thus high reverence to the bard accrued.
Next Homer rose in epic glory bright;
And bold Tyrtaeus roused to martial fight
Embattled hosts. In verse were now made known
Fate's high behests, in verse life's duties shown.
By tuneful flatteries every muse's son
The smile of mighty monarchs sought and won;

And verse supplied, at labor's welcome close,
A cheering pastime and a sweet repose.
Thus much, lest haply by a blush you wrong
The choir Pierian and the god of song.
'Tis asked, if this same knack its rise must owe
To plodding art, or from boon nature flow.
To me nor art without rich gifts of mind,
Nor yet mere genius rude and unrefined,
Seems equal to the task. They each require
The aid of each, and must as friends conspire.
He who to Pisa's goal would foremost run,
Much from his youth has suffered, much has done;
Has sweated, shivered, patient to resign
The soul-enfeebling joys of love and wine.
The Pythian piper has been fain to plod
The weary task, and shrunk beneath the rod.
But in this art, forsooth, one needs but say—
'I'm born a poet; blockheads, clear the way!
Plague take the hindmost! Genius scorns to own
Dull precept's aid, or what's unlearnt unknown.'
As some sly mountebank with trumpet loud
To buy his wares invites a gaping crowd,
So would-be poets, rich in purse and land,
Tempt with fine pennyworths the flattering band.
Is there a scribbler who can well afford
With luscious cates to crown a smoking board,
Can bail the wretch whose credit flags, and draw
The foot of beggary from the noose of law,
'Twere passing strange if such a coxcomb knew
The difference 'twixt a false friend and a true.
Be then advised; and—does the varlet live
To whom you aught have given or mean to give,
Brimful of gratitude for favors past,
With hopes those favors shall not prove the last—
Him, when to friends you would some piece rehearse,
Ask not to sit in judgment on your verse.
For 'good! rare! charming!' will be all his cry,
While tears of transport trickle from his eye;

Anon enraptured from his seat he'll bound,
Change color, clap his hands, and stamp the ground.
As with hired mummers in a funeral train,
Who feel the grief rant less than those who feign;
So will the laugher-in-his-sleeve appear
More moved than one whose praises are sincere.
Wise kings, 'tis said, who prudently intend
To prove the courtier ere they call him friend,
Ply him with copious bumpers, till the bowl
Has gently wrung each secret from the soul.
Bards! watch your critics, lest a borrowed skin
With specious covering mask the fox within.
If to Quintilius you recited aught,
'Pray change,' he'd say, 'this word; retouch that thought.'
If you protested that the passage penned
You twice or thrice had toiled in vain to mend,
'Blot out then,' he'd reply, 'the ill-wrought strain!
Back to the anvil with this trash again!'
If you choose rather to dispute his taste
Than mend your piece, no further would he waste
Or time or pains, but leave you to admire
Yourself and doggerel to your heart's desire.
The genuine critic will with honest zeal,
Feigning no raptures which he does not feel,
Trim all redundant ornament away,
On the obscure let in a lucid ray,
Blot the ambiguous, blame the loosely penned,
And prove the Aristarchus in the friend.
Nor will he say—'Why rudely should I tease
The friend I love for trifles such as these?'
For know, these trifles, while you lack the will
To speak plain truth, oft lead to serious ill,
As to his cost that friend erelong shall own,
When made the butt and byword of the town.
As the lorn wretch whom leprous scabs devour
Or jaundice gilds, one by Diana's power
Moon-stricken, or by Pan convulsed with fits,
Such is the poet who has lost his wits.

The wise all shun him, while a heedless throng
Hoot at his heels where'er he prowls along.
Bellowing his verse with head upreared, his eye
'Rolling in frenzy fine' from earth to sky,
If (like a fowler on his feathered prey
Intent) he chance to encounter in his way
Some ditch or pit, he long enough may shout
'Help, neighbors, ho!'—for none will haul him out.
But, were there some whom pity moved to fetch
A rope and drag to life the crack-brained wretch,
'Hold, sirs!' I'd cry. 'For aught that you can tell,
The madcap plunged on purpose in this well,
And wishes not to live.' Anon the fate
Of Sicily's famed poet I'd relate:
'Empedocles with lore celestial fraught,
A deathless god aspiring to be thought,
Leaped into fiery Aetna in cold blood.—
These bards are licensed (be it understood)
To perish as they list. Against his will
To save a soul were barbarous as to kill.
Nor is it his first freak; and, were it crossed
By your kind zeal, 'twere still but labor lost;
He'd soon relapse, soon play the same mad game,
And by self-slaughter seek a deathless name.
Nor is it altogether clear, why first
His bosom with this scribbling itch was cursed.
Who knows but vengeance bade him thus atone
Sins of deep dye? who knows but he has thrown
Some dread 'bidental' from its hallowed base,
Or to a father's ashes done disgrace?
One thing is plain: he has his fits of rage,
And then, as if some bear had burst its cage,
With loathsome recitation puts to flight
Learnèd and simple. Woe betides the wight,
Who meets his clutch at that unlucky time,—
Him will he read to death and stun with rime;
A very leech that drains our vital flood,
Nor quits his ruthless hold till gorged with blood!'

TIBULLUS

Written in Sickness

THOU'LT cross the Aegean waves, but not with me,
Messala, yet by thee and all thy band
I pray that I may still remembered be,
Lingering on lone Phaeacia's foreign strand.

Spare me, fell Death! no mother have I here
My charrèd bones in sorrow's lap to lay;
Oh spare! for here I have no sister dear
To shower Assyrian odours o'er my clay,

Or to my tomb with locks dishevelled come
And pour the tear of tender piety;
Nor Delia, who, ere yet I quitted Rome,
'Tis said, consulted all the gods on high.

Thrice from the boy the sacred lots she drew,
Thrice from the streets he brought her omens sure.
All smiled; but tears would still her cheeks bedew,
Nought could her thoughts from that sad journey lure.

I blent sweet comfort with my parting words,
Yet anxiously I yearned for more delay.
Dire omens now—now inauspicious birds
Detained me—now old Saturn's baleful day.

How oft I said, ere yet I left the town,
My awkward feet had stumbled at the door!

Enough: if lover heed not Cupid's frown,
His headstrong ways he'll bitterly deplore.

Where is thine Isis? what avail thee now
Her brazen sistra clashed so oft by thee?
What, while thou didst before her altars bow,
Thy pure lavations and thy chastity?

Great Isis! help! for in thy fanes displayed
Full many a tablet proves thy power to heal;
So Delia shall, in linen robes arrayed,
Her vows before thy holy threshold seal.

And morn and eve, loose-tressed, thy praise to pour,
'Mid Pharian crowds conspicuous she'll return:
But let me still my father's gods adore,
And to the old Lar his monthly incense burn.

How blest men lived when good old Saturn reigned,
Ere roads had intersected hill and dale!
No pine had then the azure wave disdained,
Or spread the swelling canvas to the gale.

No roving mariner, on wealth intent,
From foreign climes a cargo homeward bore;
No sturdy steer beneath the yoke had bent,
No galling bit the conquered courser wore.

No house had doors, no pillar on the wold
Was reared to mark the limits of the plain;
The oaks ran honey, and, all-uncontrolled,
The fleecy ewes brought milk to glad the swain.

Rage, broils, the curse of war, were all unknown;
The cruel smith had never forged the spear;
Now Jove is King—the seeds of bale are sown,
Scars, wounds, and shipwrecks, thousand deaths loom near.

Spare me, great Jove! no perjuries, I ween,
Distract my heart with agonising woe;
No impious words by me have uttered been,
Against the gods above or gods below.

But, if my thread of life be wholly run,
Upon my stone these lines engraven be:
"HERE BY FELL FATE TIBULLUS LIES UNDONE,
WHOM DEAR MESSALA LED O'ER LAND AND SEA."

But me, the facile child of tender Love,
Will Venus waft to blest Elysium's plains,
Where dance and song resound, and every grove
Rings with clear-throated warblers' dulcet strains.

Here lands untilled their richest treasures yield—
Here sweetest Cassia all untended grows—
With lavish lap the earth, in every field,
Outpours the blossoms of the fragrant rose.

Here bands of youths and tender maidens chime
In love's sweet lures, and pay the untiring vow—
Here reigns the lover, slain in youthhood's prime,
With myrtle garland round his honoured brow.

But, wrapt in ebon gloom, the torture-hell
Low lies, and pitchy rivers round it roar—
There serpent-haired Tisiphone doth yell,
And lash the damnèd crew from shore to shore.

Mark in the gate the snake-tongued sable hound,
Whose hideous howls the brazen portals close—
There lewd Ixion, Juno's tempter, bound,
Spins round his wheel in endless unrepose.

O'er nine broad acres stretched base Tityos lies,
On whose black entrails vultures ever prey;

And Tantalus is there, 'mid waves that rise
To mock his misery, and rush away.

The Danaïds, who soiled Love's lovely shrine,
Fill on, and bear their piercèd pails in vain—
There writhe the wretch who's wronged a love of mine,
And wished me absent on a long campaign!

Be chaste, my love, and let thine old nurse e'er,
To shield thy maiden fame, around thee tread,
Tell thee sweet tales, and, by the lamp's bright glare,
From the full distaff draw the lengthening thread.

And when thy maidens, spinning round thy knee,
Sleep-worn, by slow degrees their work lay by,
Oh, let me speed unheralded to thee,
Like an immortal rushing down the sky!

Then, all undrest, with ruffled locks astream,
And feet unsandalled, meet me on my way!
Aurora! Goddess of the morning beam!
Bear, on thy rosy steeds, that happy day!

Priapus on Love

A SHADY grot, Priapus, still be thine,
To shield thee from the sunshine and the snow;
But, prythee, tell me why the young men pine
For thee, and what the wiles that win them so?

For thine no shining beard—no glossy hair;
Naked thou stand'st the weary winter round—
Naked thou dost the scorching fury bear,
When the fierce Dog-star bakes the burning ground.

Thus I:—and thus, with curvèd sickle armed,
The rustic son of Bacchus made reply:—

"By many arts are gentle young men charmed,
Their hearts are yielding though they seem so shy.

"One swain delights who curbs the restless steed,
And one who cleaves the wave with snowy breast;
The warrior, too, is beauty's prize decreed,
While youthful blushes please some youngsters best.

'But let not drear vexation on thee seize,
Although at first thy darling turn away;
He'll come to bear the yoke by slow degrees—
See, time hath taught even lions to obey.

"Time wears the rock—the water moulds its shape,
Or in the brook, or 'neath the summer rain;
Time on the sunny slope matures the grape—
Time leads the constellations round again.

"Fear not to swear: by winds athwart the air
Are love's false vows o'er earth and ocean borne;
Great thanks to Jove, who hath annulled whate'er
Incautious love too eagerly hath sworn.

'By Dian's shafts, by Pallas' locks the swain
May swear, unscathed, as never mortal swore;
But let him once delay, his vows are vain—
The hours speed on returning never more.

"How soon the meadows change their purple hues!
How soon their lovely locks the poplars shed!
How lies the steed, when age his power subdues,
That first from forth the Elean barrier sped!

"I've seen an aged lover shedding tears,
And grieving o'er a barren, foolish past:
Harsh Heaven! the serpent lays aside his years,
But Fate hath willed that Beauty shall not last.

"The god of Music, and the god of Wine,
Alone luxuriate in unfading bloom;
Fair-flowing locks around their foreheads shine—
Eternal beauty 'mid eternal gloom.

"But thou, whate'er the fair desireth, yield:
On fond compliance many a conquest turns;
Nor grudge to be his escort and his shield,
Though long the way—though fierce the Dog-star burns;

"Nor, though the bow should streak the blackening sky
With many-coloured hues, portending rain—
Or, should he wish the azure waves to try,
Go, ply the oar; speed the light craft amain.

"Nor scorn to toil: nor chafe the unpractised hand;
And if he would with nets the vale enclose,
So thou canst make the cruel young man bland,
Oh, with him bear the toils, nor crave repose!

"If arms delight him, fence with gentle hand;
Unguard your side that he may hit and win:
He'll melt; a thousand kisses you'll command—
He'll fondly struggle and as fondly sin.

"He'll let you pilfer first; but soon he'll give
Unasked, and warmly clasp your neck the while;
Alas! alas! that venal arts should thrive!
Now gifts alone can win a young man's smile.

"Upon his ashes may the stones press hard
Who first made winsome youths a venal throng;
Youths! love the Muse and love the learned bard—
Nor golden gifts can mate the gifts of Song.

"See Nisus' purple locks: 'twas Song gave these:
And Song made Pelops' ivory shoulder gleam:

The Muses' care shall live while earth has trees,
Stars stud the sky, and waters fill the stream.

"May those who scorn the Muse and sell their love
The chariot of Idaean Ops pursue;
Careering, through three hundred cities rove,
And to the Phrygian notes their members hew.

"For Venus loves the gentle blandishments
And winning wiles of love in youthhood's years;
She favours aye the lover's fond laments,
And showers her blessings on his tender tears."

So sang the god—strains I might tell my love:
His young wife bade him all from memory blot:
'Tis well: these maxims prize all else above,
Ye whom the fickle fair one heedeth not!

To each his glory; but rely on me;
Scorned lovers! here! my door is free to all;
'Twill come; and youths will hither throng to be
Taught in the arts that human hearts enthral.

Ah me! ah me! love-tortured and love-lorn!
My darling yields not: arts and wiles are vain:
Spare, dear youth, spare! nor hold me up to scorn,
Lest lovers treat my precepts with disdain.

The Blessings of Peace

WHO WAS the man first forged the fatal blade?
Oh! cruel he and of an iron soul!
Then war and carnage first made gory raid,
Opening a shorter way to life's drear goal.

Yet blameless he: we've turned to woe, I ween,
The weapons formed to slay the savage beast.
'Tis gold's to blame: no wars had ever been
While still the beechen platter graced the feast.

Man reared nor towers nor forts: from all alarms
Swains slept secure, while roamed their flocks around:
Would then I'd lived, nor known of baneful arms,
Nor heard with quivering heart the trumpet's sound.

I'm dragged to war, and now, perchance, some foe
Bears the dread shaft that's doomed to pierce my side;
Save! ye paternal gods who watched me grow
And gambol at your feet, in infant pride.

Blush not ye're fashioned from an ancient tree,
So were ye in my grandsire's loved domain;
Then faith was fair, and offerings poor but free
Were yours, dear hearth-gods, in your humble fane.

And ye were pleased if vintage ever flowed,
Or spiky garland girt your holy brow;
The swain gave cates, while maiden hands bestowed
Pure honeycomb, when ye had heard his vow.

Drive hence the brazen shaft, and from my sty,
A pig to you, dear gods, shall be consigned;
While, robed in white, brow myrtle-wreathed, I'll hie
Behind you bearing baskets myrtle-twined.

Still smile on me, let valiant breasts assail
And smite down hostile chiefs along the line;
Here let me drink and hear the soldier's tale,
And see him sketch his battle-fields with wine.

Ah me! why court dark death in war? all round
It creeps unseen and silent, ever near:

Below, no crops—no vines—but the fierce hound
And the grim boatman of the Stygian mere.

And there with sunken chaps and half-burnt hair
By the dark lake the wan-faced tenants roam;
Far happier he who with his own may share
In age and competence the joys of home.

He tends his sheep, his son the lambs, and aye
His loving wife her weary husband cheers.
So may I live and see my hair grow grey,
And tell, when old, the deeds of early years.

Peace dwell with us! fair Peace and none before
Yoked to the curvèd plough the sturdy steer;
Peace reared the vine—with vine-juice filled the store
With which the sire his loving son might cheer.

Flourish in peace the mattock and the share,
While rust in darkness rots the warrior's arms—
And jolly swains from groves in waggons bear
Their wives and children back to smiling farms.

Then rage the wars of Love: her tresses rent
The maiden mourns, and weeps o'er broken doors,
And tender cheeks all bruised, till, penitent,
The victor e'en his ruthlessness deplores.

Love sits and fills with taunts the angry pair,
The tricksome elf enjoying all the scene—
Ah! steel and stone the man who'd strike the fair;
The gods are wroth at such a deed, I ween.

Enough, if he should tear her silken vest,
Or spoil the wreaths that round her tresses creep,
Or move her heart to tears: oh! four times blest
Is he whose ire can make a maiden weep!

Let savage warriors wield the sword and spear,
 But keep aloof from gentle damsel's door;
Come, bounteous Peace! still hold the wheaten ear,
 And from thy joyous lap rich fruits outpour.

The Festival

We cleanse the fruits and fields: be mute each tongue:
 This rite our fathers did of old ordain.
Come, Bacchus, come! thy horns with clusters hung!
 Come, Ceres! crowned with ears of golden grain!

Let soil and tiller keep this feast alway,
 Suspend the share—be no hard labour here;
Unchain the yoke; at well-filled stalls today
 'Tis meet with garlands ye should crown the steer.

Let rapt devotion reign, nor woman dare
 To ply the spindle while we pay the rite;
Hence far and from the altars all repair,
 Who've sought the joys of Venus yesternight.

Chaste things please heaven: with raiment pure attend:
 Make clean your hands with water from the spring;
See the doomed lamb the blazing mound ascend,
 White crowds with olive chaplets following.

Gods of our sires! we lustrate hind and plain,
 Drive from our confines every cause of bale;
May ne'er unfruitful blades deceive the swain,
 Nor fleet-foot wolves his helpless lambs assail.

Then the sleek rustic, cheered with hopes benign,
 Large fagots on his blazing hearth will pile,
And crowds of born-thralls—comfort's surest sign—
 Play round the Lar, and make twig bowers the while.

My prayers are heard: the auspicious entrails, see!
Declare the rural gods of peaceful mind;
Now bring the smoked Falernian jars for me
Of ancient date: the Chian cask unbind.

Pass round the wine; on this glad morn be gay;
To reel and stagger now be held no shame;
Let each one drink Messala's health to-day,
Each tongue resound the absent hero's name.

Famed for thy triumphs over Aquitaine,
Shedding great glory o'er thy bearded sires!
Oh come, Messala! aid me in the strain
Which homage to the vernal powers inspires.

The fields and rural gods are now my theme,
Who made our sires for acorns cease to roam,
Taught them to build their log-huts beam by beam,
And thatch with leafy boughs their humble home.

They trained the steer the bended yoke to bear,
Placed wheels beneath the cart, and, by degrees,
Weaned man primeval from his savage fare,
And bade the orchards smile with fruitful trees.

Then fertile gardens drank the watering wave—
Then first the purple fruitage of the vine,
Pressed by fair feet, immortal nectar gave;
Then water first was blent with generous wine.

The fields bear harvests, when the Dog-star's heat
Bids earth each year her golden honours shed;
And in spring's lap bees gather honey sweet,
And fill their combs from many a floral bed.

Returning from the plough, the weary swain
First sang his rustic lays in measured tread,

And, supper o'er, tried on oat-pipe some strain
To play before his gods brow-chapleted.

He, vermil-stained, great Bacchus! first made bold
To lead the untutored chorus on the floor,
And (valued prize!) from forth a numerous fold
Received a goat to swell his household store.

Young hands first strung spring-flow'rets in the fields,
And with a wreath the ancient gods arrayed;
Here its soft fleece the tender lambkin yields,
To form a task for many a tender maid.

Hence wool and distaffs fill the housewife's room,
And nimble thumbs deft spindles keep in play;
Hence maidens sing and ply the busy loom,
Hence rings the web beneath the driven lay.

Great Cupid, too, 'tis said, was born and nursed
'Mong sheep and cattle and unbroken mares;
There with unskilful bow he practised first—
Now what a skilful hand the weapon bears.

Not cattle now, as heretofore, his prey,
But blooming maids and men of stalwart frame;
He robs the youth, and makes the grey-beard say,
At scornful maiden's threshold, words of shame.

Yea, led by love, alone the maiden steals
'Mid sleeping guards, to her fond lover bound,
Breathless with fear her way on tiptoe feels—
Her fingers groping through the darkness round.

O wretched they who drain love's bitter draughts!
O happy they who 'neath his smiles abide!
Hie to our feast, blest Boy! but leave thy shafts,
And far away thy flaming torches hide.

Swains! laud and call him to your flocks aloud,
But to yourselves in silence and alone,
Or loud and free—now rave the jocund crowd,
And the curved pipe outpours its Phrygian tone.

Sport on! Night yokes her steeds: with nimble tread
The golden stars behind her chariot wheel;
Then silent sleep, with tawny wings outspread,
And gloom-wrapt dreams, behind them tottering steal.

On the Caprice of Nemesis

Ho! MACER fits the helmet to his brow,
What will become of tender Cupid now?
Say, will he with him to the camp repair,
And round his neck the armour bravely wear;
And on the land or ocean's restless tide,
In arms arrayed, still cling to Macer's side?

I pray thee, Boy, the bold deserter burn!
Beneath thy banner bid thy slave return:
If such are spared, henceforth in camp I'll dwell,
A bowl my helmet, and my cask the well.

I'll to the camp—great Queen of Love, adieu!
Adieu, fair maidens! now I'm valiant too:
Yes—I was born to hear the trumpet's blast,
I grow a mighty boaster, and at last,
When I have talked magnificently well,
A maiden's bolted doors my dreams dispel.

How oft I've sworn to see her never more!
I've sworn, and straightway sauntered to her door:
O cruel Love! thy broken shafts to see!
Thy torch extinguished! Oh! if that might be!

Thou rack'st me, wretched, and to curses driven,
Mind-maddened, I blaspheme the powers of heaven.

Ere this, in death I should have drowned despair,
But Hope still breathes "To-morrow will be fair."
Hope cheers the rustic, scatters wide the grain
Which furrowed fields may yield with endless gain.
Hope snares the bird, draws fishes from the brook,
Lured to destruction by the baited hook.
Hope to the slave sweet consolation brings—
His fetters clank, yet 'mid his toil he sings.
Hope whispers, "Nemesis will yet be kind."
Quench not her ray, O maid of cruel mind!

Spare! by thy sister's tender bones, I pray:
So may the earth press lightly on her clay!
Her spirit I revere, her tomb I'll twine
With gifts of garlands drenched with tears of mine.
I'll to her grave and sit a suppliant lone,
And to her silent dust my fate bemoan;
Nor aye she'll let her suppliant weep for thee:
Renounce thy coldness and be kind to me,
Lest her lone ghost send dreams—a ghastly band—
And at thy bed thy woeful sister stand,
As when she from the lofty casement fell,
And rushed, all bleeding, to the streams of hell.

Unworthy that one tear for me should flow,
I cease lest I renew her bitter woe—
Her speaking eyes no tears should ever blind:
'Tis Phryne wrongs me: Nemesis is kind;
The wicked Phryne spurns me from her door,
And here and there in secret evermore
Bears in her breast my leaves she ne'er may linger o'er

Oft at her door I've heard her dulcet tones:
"She's not at home," says this old crone of crones,

Oft when the hour of promised bliss drew near:
"She's sick to-night," or "racked by boding fear."
I die with torments: frenzied reason tries
To guess her lover and the means he plies.

Plague on thee, quean! thou'lt tread a world of woe,
If Heaven one tittle of my curse bestow.

Sulpicia's Beauty

MARS! on thy calends, fair Sulpicia see,
Deck'd in her gay habiliments for thee.
Come—Venus will forgive: descend, if wise:
To view her beauties leave thyself the skies.
But oh beware! lest, gazing on her charms,
Fierce as thou art, thou drop thy shameful arms.
For from her eyes, when gods are Cupid's aim,
He lights two lamps, that burn with keenest flame.
In every act, and step, and motion seen,
Grace stealthy glides, and forms her easy mien:
Graceful her locks in loose disorder spread;
Graceful the smoother braid that binds her head:
She charms, when Tyrian purple folds her limbs;
She charms, when white her snowy drapery swims:
Thus blithe Vertumnus in th' Olympian hall
Shifts all his thousand shapes, and charms in all.
She only of her sex deserves the train
Of wool twice dipp'd in Tyrus' crimson stain:
Hers to possess whate'er the Arab reaps
Of harvest shrubs, whence liquid fragrance weeps:
Whatever pearls the sable Indian's hand
Culls on his eastern ocean's ruddy sand.
Her on these calends, O ye Muses! sing:
Let thy shell'd harp, exulting Phoebus! ring:
The festal rite let future years prolong;
No nymph more worthy of your choral song.

The Chase

WHETHER, fierce churning boars! in meads ye stray,
Or haunt the shady mountain's devious way;
What not your tusks, my loved Cerinthus spare!
Know, Cupid! I consign him to your care.
What madness 'tis, shagg'd tractless wilds to beat,
And wound with pointed thorns your tender feet:
Oh! why to savage beasts your charms oppose?
With toils and blood-hounds why their haunts enclose?
The lust of game decoys you far away;
Ye blood-hounds, perish, and ye toils, decay!

Yet, yet could I with loved Cerinthus rove
Through dreary deserts and the thorny grove;
The cumbrous meshes on my shoulders bear,
And dare the monsters with my barbed spear;
Could track the bounding stags through tainted grounds,
Beat up their cover, and unchain the hounds:
But most to spread our artful toils I'd joy,
For while we watch'd them, I could clasp the boy!
Then, as entranced in amorous bliss we lay,
Mix'd soul with soul, and melted all away!
Snared in our nets, the boar might safe retire,
And owe his safety to our mutual fire.

Oh! without me ne'er taste the joys of love,
But a chaste hunter in my absence prove.
And oh! may boars the wanton fair destroy,
Who would Cerinthus to their arms decoy!
Yet, yet I dread!—Be sports your father's care;
But you, all passion! to my arms repair!

On Sulpicia's Illness

Come, Phoebus! with your loosely floating hair,
Oh soothe her torture, and restore the fair!
Come, quickly come! we supplicant implore,
Such charms your happy skill ne'er saved before!
Let not her frame consumptive pine away,
Her eyes grow languid, and her bloom decay;
Propitious come; and with you bring along
Each pain-subduing herb and soothing song;
Or real ills, or whate'er ills we fear,
To ocean's farthest verge let torrents bear.
Oh! rack no more, with harsh, unkind delays,
The youth, who ceaseless for her safety prays;
'Twixt love and rage his tortur'd soul is torn;
And now he prays, now treats the gods with scorn.

Take heart, fond youth; you have not vainly pray'd,
Still persevere to love th' enchanting maid:
Sulpicia is your own! for you she sighs,
And slights all other conquests of her eyes:
Dry then your tears; your tears would fitly flow
Did she on others her esteem bestow.

O come! what honour will be yours, to save
At once two lovers from the doleful grave?
Then both will emulous exalt your skill;
With grateful tablets both your temples fill;
Both heap with spicy gums your sacred fire;
Both sing your praises to th' harmonious lyre:
Your brother-gods will prize your healing powers.
Lament their attributes, and envy yours.

On Her Lover's Birth-day

WITH feasts I'll ever grace the sacred morn,
When my Cerinthus, lovely youth! was born.
At birth to you th' unerring Sisters sung
Unbounded empire o'er the gay and young:
But I, chief I! (if you my love repay,)
With rapture own your ever-pleasing sway.
This I conjure you, by your charming eyes,
Where love's soft god in wanton ambush lies!
This by your genius and the joys we stole,
Whose sweet remembrance still enchants my soul!

Great natal Genius! grant my heart's desire,
So shall I heap with costly gums your fire!
Whenever fancy paints me to the boy,
Let his breast pant with an impatient joy:
But if the libertine for others sigh,
(Which Love forbid!) O Love! your aid deny.
Nor, Love! be partial, let us both confess
The pleasing pain, or make my passion less.
But oh! much rather 'tis my soul's desire,
That both may feel an equal, endless fire.

In secret my Cerinthus begs the same,
But the youth blushes to confess his flame:
Assent, thou god! to whom his heart is known,
Whether he public ask, or secret own.

Heart's Desire

ACCEPT, O natal queen! with placent air,
The incense offer'd by the learned fair.
She's robed in cheerful pomp, O power divine!

She's robed to decorate your matron shrine;
Such her pretence; but well her lover knows
Whence her gay look, and whence her finery flows.

Thou who dost o'er the nuptial bed preside,
Oh! let not envious night their joys divide,
But make the bridegroom amorous as the bride!
So shall they tally, matchless lovely pair!
A youth all transport, and a melting fair!
Then let no spies their secret haunts explore;
Teach them thy wiles, O Love! and guard the door.

Assent, chaste queen! in purple pomp appear;
Thrice wine is pour'd, and cakes await you, here.
Her mother tells her for what boon to pray;
Her heart denies it, though her lips obey.
She burns, that altar as the flames devour;
She burns, and slights the safety in her power.
So may the boy, whose chains you proudly wear,
Through youth the soft indulgent anguish bear;
And when old age has chill'd his every vein,
The dear remembrance may he still retain!

SULPICIA

The Avowal

LET OTHER maids, whose eyes less prosperous prove,
Publish my weakness, and condemn my love.

Exult, my heart! at last the queen of joy,
Won by the music of her votary's strain,
Leads to the couch of bliss herself the boy;
And bids enjoyment thrill in every vein.

Last night entranced in ecstasy we lay,
And chid the quick, too quick return of day!
But stop, my hand! beware what loose you scrawl,
Lest into curious hands the billet fall.
No—the remembrance charms!—begone, grimace!
Matrons! be yours formality of face.
Know with a youth of worth the night I spent,
And cannot, cannot for my soul, repent!

To Messala

AT LAST the natal odious morn draws nigh
When to your cold, cold villa I must go;
There, far, too far from my Cerinthus sigh:
Oh why, Messala! will you plague me so?

Let studious mortals prize the sylvan scene,
And ancient maidens hide them in the shade;

Green trees perpetually give me the spleen;
For crowds, for joy, for Rome, Sulpicia's made!

Your too officious kindness gives me pain.
How fall the hail-stones! hark! how howls the wind!
Then know, to grace your birth-day should I deign,
My soul, my all, I leave at Rome behind.

To Messala

AT LAST the fair's determin'd not to go:
My lord! you know the whimsies of the sex.
Then let us gay carouse, let odours flow;
Your mind no longer with her absence vex:
For, oh! consider, time incessant flies;
But every day's a birth-day to the wise!

To Cerinthus

THAT I, descended of Patrician race,
With charms of fortune, and with charms of face,
Am so indifferent grown to you of late,
So little cared for, now excites no hate.
Rare taste, and worthy of a poet's brain,
To prey on garbage, and a slave adore!
In such to find out charms, a bard must feign
Beyond what fiction ever feign'd of yore.
Her friends may think Sulpicia is disgraced;
No! no! she honours your transcendent taste.

To Cerinthus

ON MY account, to grief a ceaseless prey,
Dost thou a sympathetic anguish prove?

I would not wish to live another day,
If my recovery did not charm my love:
For what were life, and health, and bloom to me,
Were they displeasing, beauteous youth, to thee.

To Cerinthus

IF FROM the bottom of my love-sick heart,
Of last night's coyness I do not repent,
May I no more your tender anguish hear,
No longer see you shed th' impassion'd tear.
You grasp'd my knees, and yet to let you part—
Oh night more happy with Cerinthus spent!
My flame with coyness to conceal I thought,
But this concealment was too dearly bought.

PROPERTIUS

Cynthia

UNSCATHED was I by Cupid's dart
Till Cynthia's eyes enslaved my heart;
Then staring down my brave conceit,
Love trampled me beneath his feet,
And taught me in his naughty school
To hate a prude and play the fool.
Now for a whole year must I brook
The amorous gods' forbidding look;
Yet, Tullus, does my passion grow,
My fever no abatement know.
Milanion task on task went through
Wild Atalanta to subdue:—
'Mid wildering caverns groped his way,
Made bristling monsters stand at bay,
And, by Hylaeus bludgeoned well,
Lay groaning on the Arcadian fell.
'Twas thus he tamed that girl of speed
By wooing word and doughty deed.
With me Love halts, no antics plays,
And quite forgets his customed ways.
Ye hags, who conjure down the moon,
And o'er Medean cauldrons croon,
Come, beldams, make my mistress meek
And turn her paler than my cheek!
You and your spells I'll then esteem
And own your power o'er star and stream.
Ye friends, whose warning comes too late,

Find my sick heart some opiate.
Let cautery burn, let scalpel flay,
If but my wrath may have its say!
Send me o'er leagues of land or sea
Where woman cannot follow me!
Bide as ye are, ye happy pairs!
Love on in peace! Heaven hears your prayers.
My goddess works me ceaseless spites,
And idle love leads galling nights.
Beware my fate! To one be true,
Nor change the old love for a new.
To this advice lend timely ears,
Or ye shall reck my rede with tears!

Love of Dress

WHY WEAR, my Life, when thou abroad dost stir,
A head trimmed up to fashion's latest laws?
A Coan vestment of transparent gauze,
And hair perfumed with Orontean myrrh.

Why set thyself on gems and costly dress?
Why mar with trinkets Nature's form divine,
And not allow thy beauties forth to shine
In all their own, their matchless loveliness?

To thee such aids can add no charms: ah no!
True love will aye disdain the artist's care.
See! the fair fields a thousand colours wear
And ivy-sprays far best spontaneous grow.

Fairer in lone rock-clefts green arbutes rise,
Fairer the streamlet wends its wandering way,
Lovelier bright pebbles gem their native bay,
Sweetlier song-birds trill artless melodies.

Not so did Phoebe merit Castor's hand,
Nor Hilaïra win her Pollux' love;
Not so, when Idas erst with Phoebus strove,
Appeared Marpesa by Evenus' strand.

With no false glare Hippodamia drew
Her Phrygian lord, to reign a foreign queen;
Her face no gems adorned, though fair, I ween,
As e'er Apelles on the canvas threw.

No fear for lack of lovers tortured these—
Their wealth of beauty was their modesty;
I, too, repose unwavering faith in thee:
She's rich in charms who can one lover please.

And richer thou: for Phoebus gives thee song,
And fond Calliope the Aonian lyre;
Yea, thy sweet speech my eager soul shall fire
With love for thee, my Cynthia, all life long

Thine Beauty's charms and Wisdom's priceless prize,
The brightest jewels that adorn a wife;
With these thou'lt shed a lustre round my life,
If thou wilt wretched luxuries despise.

Night Scene

As CRETE'S princess unconscious lay
When truant Theseus sailed away;
As, freed at last from rock and chain,
Andromede slept once again;
Or as some Thracian Maenad sank
Spent on Enipeus' grassy bank;
Such calm did Cynthia breathe, I wist,
With head unstably poised on wrist,

When home I staggered late at night
Behind the link-boy's flickering light.
I with what sense I still possessed
Make for her couch so lightly pressed,
Inflamed alike by love and wine—
Hard masters both—with rash design
My arm beneath her waist to slip
And open fire with hand and lip.
But, of her temper wisely ware,
Disturb her rest I did not dare:
But stood and stared, as Argus gazed
At Io's startling horns amazed.
My garlands now 'gan I untwine
And decked your temples, Cynthia mine:
Now fondly smoothed a tress that strayed,
Fruits in your palms now slyly laid.
Ungrateful even as you slept
My presents you would not accept,
For from your bosom as you lay
My lavish tributes rolled away.
And when a little sigh you heaved,
I gasped by groundless dread deceived—
Your dreams did some strange terror fill?
Or did some villain force your will?
Anon through the crossed lattice shone
A moonbeam, loth to hurry on;
At whose light touch her lids unclosed
And, arm on dinted pillow posed,
'At last!' quoth she. 'What! shown the street
By some girl else whom you ill-treat?
Where did you thus the stars outstay,
And laze alas! my night away?
Wretch! May such evenings weary you
As 'tis your wont to doom me to!
With broidery now I cheated sleep,
Now played my lyre, awake to keep;

Now dumbly mourned my lonely lot,
For stranger arms so oft forgot.
That was the burden of my woe
Till downy slumber laid me low!'

The Rival Rejected

So, MADCAP, all my love you prize
Cheaper than cold Illyria's skies?
Fair wind or foul, you'll sail from me
With your new flame—who'er he be?
Is yours the spirit that can brave
The hard bunk and the howling wave?
Your delicate feet tread fields of hoar
And snows they never felt before?
Oh! twice its term may winter drag,
And seamen lounge while Pleiads lag!
Kind storms, keep Cynthia moored in port,
Nor lull and bring my prayers to nought!
Rage on, when out her bark shall stand,
And, rooted on the desolate strand,
I shake my fist towards her track
And call the heartless creature back!
But no! Whate'er your falsehood's meed,
May mermaid hands your voyage speed,
And hie you where Ceraunian ness
Guards Oricos from storm and stress!
No wife shall tempt me not to pour
My heart out, darling, at your door.
I'll pester every bustling tar
To tell me in what port you are.
I'll say, though she at Atrax be
Or Elis, she'll come back to me:—

She's here! For traitor is she none.
Down with my foes! I've wooed and won!

Lewd Envy's hopes must be resigned:
Strange ways are not to Cynthia's mind,
She loves me, and, for my sake, Rome
More than fair countries far from home.
A truckle bed she'd liefer share
And be mine own, come foul, come fair,
Than take for dower the wealth that erst
From Pisa's royal stud was pursed.
Rich fee, nor pledge of richer fee,
Has bribed her from my arms to flee.
The heart that pearls nor gold could sway
Bends to the homage of my lay!
The Muses myths? Apollo slow
To aid the love that trusts him? No!
She's mine! My feet tread heights divine.
Come day, come night, rare Cynthia's mine!
And none can steal her love away,
Be this my boast till I grow grey!

Change and Constancy

WHY CHARGE me still with inactivity,
As if from conscious Rome I would not go?
Lo! Cynthia sleeps as far from where I lie
As Hypanis from the Venetian Po.

No more she holds me clasped in fond embrace,
Nor with sweet accents glads my listening ear,
I once was dear: nor bosoms e'er bore trace
Of happier loves than ours or more sincere.

Does heaven with envy stung, our hearts estrange?
Does Promethean herb our union rend?
I'm altered: distance too doth maidens change;
How soon doth love to sore disfavour tend.

Now first I'm forced long nights' lone hours to bear;
My very sighs are painful to my ears;
Blest he who still may weep before his fair—
For love rejoices in a lover's tears.

Blest he who, scorned, may after others range
For love transferred may find felicity:
None else I'll love—I cannot, cannot change;
Cynthia—my first—my latest love shall be.

Waldeinsamkeit

In this discreet and leafy spot,
Where Zephyr reigns and man is not,
If rocks can keep a secret, here
To ease my heart I need not fear.
How, Cynthia, did your scorn begin?
Whence have my woes their origin?
Once amid happy lovers placed,
I in your heart am now disgraced!
What crime so heavy a sentence draws?
Another girl? Is that the cause?
Back to me, then, and smile! Save yours
No pretty foot has passed my doors.
I owe you grudge for this rebuff,
Yet is my wrath not mad enough
Your fury to deserve for years
And spoil your eyes with floods of tears.
Or is't that love is not avowed
By pallid cheek and protest loud?
Witness, if tree can feel like man,
O beech, O pine beloved of Pan,
How oft your mossy shades acclaim,
Your carven boles bear Cynthia's name!
Or may I not my wrongs deplore—
Things I but whisper to your door?

Humbly I've done your bidding proud,
Nor dared to blame your deeds aloud.
And my reward? The haunted well,
The wayside couch, the frozen fell;
And, would I on my woes descant,
Some twittering bird for confidant!
But—kind or curst—let forests cry
'Cynthia!' and lonesome crags reply!

Love's Image

He was a genius deft and wise
Who pictured Love in boyish guise.
He knew how senseless lovers are
To let small frets great pleasures mar.
A god with human heart he drew,
Tempestuous wings he gave him too
Well knowing that we lovers toss
On waters where wild currents cross,
And neither can we ever know
The quarter whence the wind will blow.
A quiver from each shoulder hangs
And shafts he holds with barbèd fangs
Because he strikes us unaware
That any enemy is there.
Once hit we're never free from pain;
In me his arrows still remain,
His image haunts me everywhere,
But he has lost his wings, I swear,
For from my heart he ne'er takes flight
But wars upon me day and night.
What boots it, Love, with me to stay
Whose life-blood has been drained away?
Since a boy's form you manifest
A girl should take you to her breast,
'Twere meeter that your poisoned dart

Should rankle in a virgin heart.
'Tis not myself your chastenings try
But the mere ghost that once was I.
If to destroy this ghost you please
Who will indite you songs like these
That humbly glorify your name
Since Cynthia's beauties they proclaim,
Her taper hands, her graceful tread,
Her jet black eyes, her golden head!

Passion's Power

WHAT bliss is mine! Oh! Glorious night!
Oh! little bed of great delight!
What talks we had by candle flame!
When it was doused what struggles came!
At times she lay with breasts exposed
The while in lusty bouts we closed;
Anon she made me sober down
And sought the shelter of her gown.
When drowsy eyelids downwards slid
She laid her lips on either lid,
And when they opened at her kiss
Said 'Should a lover laze like this?'
How various were the ways we clung!
How long my lips on her lips hung!
Darkness the lover's work impedes;
In love it is the eye that leads.
'Twas seeing Helen, nude, 'tis said,
Arise from Menelaus' bed
That desperate love in Paris bred.
Naked Endymion, they say,
With Phoebus' naked sister lay
If you persist in lying dressed
My hands shall tear away your vest;
Nay more, if still you anger me,

A bruised arm shall your mother see,
A girl who has a mother been
May blush to have her bosom seen;
Your breasts are firm and you may claim
To wanton with no sense of shame.
The long, long night is drawing near
When never more will dawn appear;
While therefore we are spared by fate
My loving eyes with beauty sate
And may your favour bind us two
With ties that time can ne'er undo,
Just like the male and female dove
Completely one in mutual love.
Mad passion passes, some suppose;
When it is true no end it knows.
As well could earth the farmer cheat
By growing weeds from grains of wheat;
Or Phoebus drive his dazzling car
With horses black as midnights are;
Or rivers start to run up hills;
Or fish to live in dried up rills;
As I could let my longings stray:
In life, in death, I'm hers alway.
If she should grant me nights like this
A year would seem a life of bliss,
If many such she deigned to give
I in the seventh heaven should live.
Nay, with one night the veriest clod
Would deem himself a demigod.
If all the world were but agreed
To imitate the life I lead
And, heavy after draughts of wine,
Each by a woman's side recline,
No sword a-thirst for blood there'd be,
No battleships upon the sea,
Nor would by Actium's tides be tossed
The bones of Roman sailors lost,

Nor Rome so often beat her breast
By her own victories obsessed
In mourning for her triumphs won
By Mother Rome o'er Roman son.
Justly forsooth will history praise
The civil discords of these days!
The battles in which I contend
Nor god nor goddess can offend.
Now, Cynthia, while as yet 'tis day
Throw not the fruit of life away.
Not all your kisses are enough;
See how the scattering petals slough
From brows with withering garlands dressed
And in the winecups float at rest.
So, though to-day so sweet prevails
The fragrance that our love exhales,
To-morrow's dawn, it well may be,
Will seal the fate of you or me.

The Honest Whore

I'VE HELD in horror till to-day
The path in which the riffraff stray,
Now water from a storage tank
Tastes sweet to me however rank.
'What has she done?' You'd deem a knave
A man who bribed a woman's slave
To bring him promise of a day
And then her doings to betray.
'In what piazza does she wait?'
'What park does she perambulate?'
And after all you've done to please—
No harder tasks had Hercules—
A letter you receive to say
'What are you giving me to-day?'
Perish the fools who lie in wait

Before a seldom opened gate!
The price you pay is much too dear
To get one night in all the year
When you are privileged to brook
The concierge's sullen look
And, when the alarm sounds, to be shut
In hiding in a dirty hut.
The woman I prefer is she
Who walks the pavement bold and free,
Who shuffles up the Sacred Way
In slippers soiled with mud and clay,
Who wears no veil upon her head
And has no concierge to dread.
She will not, should a man accost,
Suffer a moment to be lost.
No assignation will she break
Nor be importunate to take
Sums that a father would lament,
Good thrifty soul, his son had spent;
Nor say 'I'm frightened, get up pray,
My man is coming back to-day.'
Clandestine, shamefaced love I'll make
No longer, but my pleasure take
With girls the Syrian pimps export
And those from Babylonia brought.
Since freedom lovers must forswear
To love no gentleman will care.

The Dream

In dreams I saw your vessel lost,
And you, my life, mid billows tossed—
Thickly the Ionian spindrift flies—
You play your arms—the effort dies—
I hear you, by confession, free
Your conscience of your lies to me.

No longer can your weakness bear
The burden of your sodden hair.
So through the storm-empurpled main
Did Helle toss and toss again
When from the ram's soft golden fleece
She fell and drowned off Chersonese.
Oh! how I dreaded this might be
Henceforward known as Cynthia's sea,
And therefore while through it he steers
The sailor might be moved to tears!
What did I not to Neptune vow,
And to Leucothoe, goddess now,
And eke to Leda's twins, while you
Just raised your fingers into view
And at the very point of death
Invoked my name with your last breath!
Had Glaucus seen your eyes, you'd be
The Nymph of the Ionian sea
And jealous Nereids would inveigh
'Gainst one more beautiful than they—
Cymothoe with her deep blue hair,
Nesaea, too, so silvery fair—
And then I saw a dolphin speed
To succour you—methought indeed
The very dolphin that of yore
Arion's lyre to safety bore.
Now did I strive, and strive, and strive
From some rock pinnacle to dive;
And lo! my abject terror broke
This evil dream, and I awoke.
All must admire me when they see
So beautiful a girl as she
Submissive to my will, and hence
Must deem me of some consequence.
Not for the wealth of Persian kings
Or all the gold Pactolus brings
Would ever this by her be said

'My poet, you must leave my bed.'
Reading my poems she'll aver
Rich men are odious to her,
For never woman more than she
Devoutly worshipped poetry.
He who a woman's purse can fill
Can purchase rapture where he will,
But constancy and honour prove
A surer pledge of happy love.
If so be that my mistress planned
A voyage to some distant land
I'll squire her and the selfsame air
Shall waft us both, a loving pair,
The selfsame beach our bed shall be
We'll shelter neath the selfsame tree,
And often will we drink our fill
Of water from the selfsame rill;
But be the poop or prow my bed
One plank shall lovers both bestead.
The greatest dangers will I brave
Whether Eurus fierce shall rave
Or by the wintry Auster blown
We're driven into seas unknown,
Or battered by such gales as erst
On poor Ulysses' vessel burst
And tossed the Grecian ships of war
By hundreds on Euboea's shore,
And shook the twin Symplegades,
The uncertain gate to unknown seas
When through the gap the pigeon flew
And piloted the Argo's crew.
Lest ever she escape my gaze
Let lightning set the ship ablaze!
Were we cast naked on the beach
We shall be clinging each to each.
My corpse may drift upon the wave
If only earth grant you a grave.

But courage! Neptune never lowers
Upon a love as great as ours,
Neptune who in affairs of love
Can rival e'en his brother Jove.
Amymone can vouch for this
Crushed in his arms in Argolis
When by a stroke his trident brought
From Lerne's marsh the spring she sought.
At once the promised price he paid
For the compliance of the maid,
And her gold pitcher overflowed
With water by the god bestowed.
So Boreas, whose cruel reign
Extends o'er continent and main,
Erechtheus' daughter bore away
The ardent god's complaisant prey.
Believe me, Cynthia, for us twain
Its turmoil Scylla will restrain,
Nor will Charybdis suck us down
In its rough ebb and flow to drown,
Nor will the very stars enshroud
Their guiding light behind a cloud.
Orion bright and clear will glow
And bright and clear the Kid will show
But willingly my doom I'd face
If I should drown in your embrace,
For such a destiny would be
An honourable end for me.

The Sickness

I

JOVE, have late pity on my stricken fair!
Death of such beauty to thy charge will lie;
The time hath come, when seethes the sweltering air,
And earth 'gins glow beneath the Dog-star dry.

No heat's in fault, no climate's here a churl,
But the gods' sanctity, so oft despised;
This mars, and hath marred, many a wretched girl;
Wind and wave seize the oaths they solemnized.
Vexed Venus thou compared with her? She's vain,
Jealous of all fair rivals equally.
Or hast thou spurned Pelasgian Juno's fane,
Or dared to doubt the grace of Pallas' eye?
Never, ye fair, learn ye restraint of tongue.
This fate ill-speaking and thy beauty send.
But know that, by life's many dangers stung,
A softer hour's for thee, at the day's end.
Io (her head changed) lowed in girlhood's bloom,
Goddess to-day, that drank Nile's streams a cow.
Far, in youth's dawn, roved Ino from her home,
Goddess to-day, that drank Nile's streams a cow.
Doomed was Andromeda to fiends o' the sea;
Wife she became of Perseus, famed afar.
A bear, Callisto roved through Arcady;
The midnight sails she guideth with her star.
Yet, should the Fates haste on thy life's repose
(Those Fates made blessèd by thy sepulture),
Thou shalt tell Semele in what peril goes
Beauty, and she'll believe; she suffered, sure!
And there, among Maeonian heroines all,
The first place thine shall be, by all's consent.
Use thy sick strength to be Fate's willing thrall!
The god, ay, and the cruel day, relent.
Thy beauty ev'n his Juno shall forgive;
Yea, Juno melts, when maidens may not live.

II

Fail the wheels spun to the chant magical,
Burnt lies the laurel on the cindered fire;
The moon's averse so oft from heav'n to fall,
And the swart bird sings omens of the pyre.
One dark-blue boat of destiny shall bear

Our loves, a-sail from the infernal brink.
Spare both! Not one alone, oh prithee!, spare!
I live, if she lives; if she sinks, I sink.
Wherefore I pledge myself in holy line
To write 'The might of Jove hath saved my girl.'
She'll sacrifice, then sit at feet of thine,
And, sitting there, her perils long unfurl.
Thy clemency, Persephone, bestead!
Lord of Persephone, no fiercer be!
A thousand thousand fair ones with the dead!
One beauty bide above! O grant this me!
Iope's with you; with you's Tyro white;
Europe, vile Pasiphae's with you,
Achaea and old Troy, their beauties bright,
Thebes and fall'n Troy, that gray king Priam knew.
And every girl of Rome that ranked with these
Is gone, to glut the pyre's most greedy breath.
Beauty lives not for ever, Fortune flees;
For each, or late or soon, abideth death.
Since thou, my dawn, art spared great danger now,
Render Diana dances, her due rites,
And to the goddess, one time heifer, vow
Vigil, and pay to me ten votive nights!

The Vision

MESEEMED in Helicon's soft shade I lay,
Where flows, Bellerophon, thy horse's spring,
And that the strength was in this weakling clay
Thy monarchs, Alba, and their deeds to sing,
And my small lips the mighty fountains neared
Whence father Ennius slaked his thirst of yore,
Chanting the Curii, the Horatii speared,
The regal prize Aemilius' galleon bore,
Fabius' delays that won, the fatal fight
Of Cannae, gods to duteous prayers that swerved,

Lares, who Hannibal from Rome could fright,
And Jupiter by cackling goose preserved:
When me from Castaly's tree doth Phoebus view,
And, cave-ward leaning on his golden lyre:
'What mak'st with such a flood, thou madman? Who
Bade thee to toils of heroes' song aspire?
No fame from hence, Propertius! Thy hope's lost!
Those little wheels must roll on tender meads,
That oft upon the stool thy book be tossed,
When the lone girl, her man awaiting, reads.
Why hath thy page the appointed ring outrun?
Thy wit's frail craft must not o'erweighted be.
This oar skim shallows, and the sand that one!
So thou'lt be safe; great tumult out at sea!'
He spake, and showed me with his ivory quill
A home, with path thereto, through mosses made.
Here a green grot, inset with pebbled frill,
And hanging timbrels o'er the pumice laid,
The Muses' instruments, thy form in clay,
Silenus sire, thy reeds, O Tegea's Pan;
Queen Venus' birds, the doves, my brood alway,
Dipped scarlet bills in pool Gorgonian.
The Maidens nine, in their allotted fields,
Plied, at her own gift each, their dainty hands;
This gathers ivy for the wands, this wields
The lyre-song, this (two-handed) wreathes rose-bands.
Then touched me one of that assembly bright
(As from her face I deem, Calliope):
'Ever be borne content by swans snow-white!
To arms no trampling charger leadeth thee.
Not thine upon the raucous horn to blare
Ships' calls, or dye the Aonian grove with war,
Or in what plains, 'neath Marius' standards, dare
The foot-ranks, and Rome breaks the Teuton star,
Or where wild Rhine, with Suabian blood nigh drowned,
Bears wounded bodies on lamenting stream!
The watch at alien doors of lovers crowned,

The drunken marks of night-flights, these thy theme!
That girls forth from their prisons he may sing,
Through thee, who'd gull sour husbands by his craft.'
So spake Calliope, and from the spring
Moistened my lips then with Philetas' draught.

Cleopatra and Caesar

WHY WONDER that the other sex
The tenor of my life should vex
And make a man a woman's thrall,
A bondsman at her beck and call?
My courage you should not arraign
Because I cannot break my chain:
The sailor has a right to fear,
None better knows when death is near;
The soldier who has fought and bled
Has cause the battle-field to dread.
I also in my earlier days
Boasted the principles you praise;
But now from my example learn
To fear that next will come your turn.
Fire-breathing bulls Medea broke
And harnessed to an iron yoke;
She sowed the dragon's teeth and soon
Upsprang from each an armed dragoon;
With purpose that the Golden Fleece
Should go to Aeson's halls in Greece,
She muzzled by her magic wit
The cruel jaws that guarded it.
Penthesilea, madly bold,
Attacked the Grecian fleet of old
With arrows from the saddle sped;
When the gold casque had bared her head,
At sight of such a beauteous brow
Her conqueror was the conquered now.

Omphale, she of Lydian kin,
Who bathed in Gyges' famous linn,
Attained to such a high degree
In beauty's hierarchy, that he
Who rid the world of many a scourge
And set his pillars on its verge,
Sat spinning with his horny hands—
A woman's task—soft woollen strands.
Semiramis built Babylon,
She chose the site and built thereon
The Persian town with walls so thick
Of clay sun-hardened into brick,
Two chariots meeting might pass free
And never graze an axle-tree:
With dams Euphrates she controlled
Where through her capital it rolled.
Bactra she bade her sway to own
And do obeisance to her throne.
Why need I on this count indite
Both gods and heroes as I might?
E'en Jove from censure cannot free
Himself and his fraternity!
What of that woman, she whose charms
Brought scandal on the Roman arms,
And, strumpet to her very thralls,
Aspired to pass the Roman walls
And rule our Senate, as the fee
Due from her lover's lechery?
Cursed Alexandria, Memphis curst,
Thou land in cunning deeply versed,
How often on thy noisome silt
Has Roman blood been freely spilt!
Thy sandy beach at one fell stroke
Pompey's three triumphs dared revoke.
Never by Romans shall this blot
On Rome's escutcheon be forgot!
Death had come better to him, slain

In battle on Pharsalia's plain:
Better have thought to save his life
And serve the father of his wife.
To think that courtesan obscene,
Incestuous Canopus' queen,
That worst of stigmas branded on
The royal race of Macedon,
Dared pit against our Jupiter
Her god Anubis, half a cur!
Compel our Tiber for a while
To bear defiance from the Nile!
Aside the Roman trumpet set
For Egypt's clattering castanet!
Pursue the swift Liburnian craft
In barges, punted like a raft!
Longed on Tarpeia's rock to set
The effeminate mosquito net!
And yearned to queen it in the place
That Marius' spoils and statues grace!
How could that Rome at whose command
The fasces broke in Tarquin's hand,
Alike by name and nature proud,
Before a woman now have bowed?
Then triumph, Rome, and, safe again
Pray that Augustus long may reign.
The city on the Seven Hills
That rules the nations as it wills,
She caused, by war's alarms beset,
To tremble at a woman's threat.
Yet did she flee, and haunt awhile
The marshes of the affrighted Nile,
Until, submitting in despair
Her wrists the Roman fetters wear.
I've seen the sacred adder's fang
Upon her bosom close and hang,
And her whole body slowly creep
On the dark road to endless sleep.
'Why, Rome, should I have caused you dread,'

Her own besotted voice had said,
'While you among your men of state
Could count a citizen so great?'
Not now we boast of Scipio's fleet,
The standards laid at Furius' feet,
Or Pontus later forced to peace
By Pompey in the Chersonese,
The victory over Syphax won,
The triumph over Barca's son,
The haughty Pyrrhus forced to kneel
And lay his head beneath our heel,
Curtius who closed the gaping rent
And made it his own monument,
Decius who spurred his charger's flanks
And galloped through the Latins' ranks:
'Horatius Lane' reminds the town
Of the Sublician bridge hewn down,
And there is one of martial fame
Who from a raven took his name.
Ye powers celestial, at whose will
These walls were founded, guard them still:
Although so long as Caesar's here
Scarce Jove himself need Romans fear!
Apollo on the Leucadian coast
Shall call to mind that routed host:
So grand a militant array
Was shattered in a single day!
You sailors, whether starting out
Or for your home ports put about,
Thank Caesar that you're roaming free
From end to end the Ionian Sea.

To Bacchus

HUMBLY to thine altars now I hasten,
Fill my sails, and waft me o'er the brine;
Bacchus! thou canst haughty Venus chasten,
And dispel the cares of love with wine.

By thy power are lovers joined and parted;
Soothe my troubled soul, for thou as I—
Witness Ariadne—must have smarted—
Ere thy lynxes bore her to the sky.

In my bones the old flames ever-burning
Death or wine shall doom to disappear;
Sober nights keep lonely lovers turning
On their couch, distraught by hope and fear.

But if thou this fever fierce dispellest,
Wooing o'er my weary soul to sleep,
I thy vines will plant, train trimly-trellised,
And secure from prowling wild beast keep—

Foam my vats with purple must, and tender
Grapes ne'er fail my treading feet to stain!
And to thee, O hornèd god! I'll render
Homage all my days that yet remain.

I, thy poet styled, shall sing thy valour—
Sing thy birth when bolts Aetnean flew—
Tell how Indian armèd hosts in pallor
Fled before thy dread Nysaean crew—

Sing Lycurgus' fury, unavailing,
At the planting of thy gladsome tree—
Sing of impious Pentheus—theme ne'er failing
To delight thee—slain by Maenads three—

Tyrrhene pirates, changed to dolphins, leaping
From the ship where sprang the sprouting vine;
And thy sweet-breath'd streams through Naxos sweeping,
Whence the men of Naxos quaff thy wine—

Neck with clustered ivy-berries glowing—
Streaming locks with Tyrian turban bound—

Ivory shoulders with sweet unguents flowing—
 Trailing robe thy snow-white feet around—

Here, Dircaean nymphs soft tabors dashing,
 Horn-hoofed Fauns with gaping reeds in hand—
There, hoarse cymbals great Cybebe clashing,
 Turret-crowned, 'mid Ida's roving band—

Golden bowl to pay the meet oblation,—
 Ministering priest before thy shrine,
Crowning all the rites with due libation,
 From the cup a-brim with purple wine—

In no humble strain these themes I'll thunder
 Like a peal from deep-mouthed Pindar's breast,—
Only burst this cruel bond asunder—
 Lull, oh lull my aching head to rest!

Disillusion

THAT beauty, woman, you so prize,
Once over-rated by mine eyes,
Is false: 'twas love that on you gazed
And so extravagantly praised.
Now, Cynthia, do I blush for shame
That verse of mine has brought you fame.
So often have I feigned to find
All beauty's charms in you combined
That love my reason could deceive
And what you were not, that believe.
E'en your complexion have I sworn
Was rosier than the blush of dawn,
Although I knew that dazzling bloom
Was studied in your dressing-room.
My folly from that life of vice
My father's friends could not entice,

Nor magic wash away the stain
In all the waters of the main.
No longer knife nor cautery,
Nor shipwreck in the open sea
Need I to force me to confess
I lied about your loveliness.
Enthralled, worse torments far I bore
In Venus' cruel athanor,
And helpless against love's attack
My hands were bound behind my back.
Flower-crowned my bark's in port at last,
The Syrtes crossed, the anchor cast:
Storm-wearied now I breathe again,
And wounds that gaped no longer pain.
Good Sense, if such a goddess be,
I dedicate my life to thee.
To Jove in vain have I appealed;
To all my prayers his ears were sealed.

Farewell

I HAD become your table's jest,
The butt of every babbling guest!
Five faithful years your yoke I bore:
Now gnaw your nails—I'm yours no more.
Tears move me not: that trick's been played.
Tears ever were your ambuscade.
My tears at parting wrath will dry:
You make the collar gall, not I.
Though at my farewell tears will flow
Dewing your threshold, still I go:
But ne'ertheless your door shall stand
Unbroken by my indignant hand.
You may the weight of years you bear,
The age you hide with so much care,
Bow down, and ominously trace

Unsightly wrinkles on your face.
These may your mirror mock and scorn
The grey hairs by their roots uptorn.
Slighted and shunned may your turn come
To find the gallants not at home.
Withered with age your past you'll rue
When what you did is done to you.
Such is the inevitable doom
Of beauty that has lost its bloom.
Begin to fear your fate—My verse
Has prophesied the coming curse.

Letter to a Soldier

FROM Arethusa to her lord,
Her own Lycotas, still abroad—
If mine you can be said to be
When you're so long away from me.
If aught illegible appears
It has been blotted by my tears;
Or if it puzzles you to guess
What some misshapen strokes express,
Know that my nerves cannot command
The tremors of my love-sick hand.
This year dawn after dawn goes by
And Bactrians see your face, not I:
Once 'twas the Seric foe who veil
Their chargers in a coat of mail;
The Getae once 'neath northern stars
And Britons in their painted cars;
And once the tribes by India's strand
Whose skins the eastern sun has tanned.
This only, husband, did you plight
To kiss me just for one brief night,
When to the pressure of your arms
I yielded up my virgin charms?

'Twould seem the torch that led the way
As omen on my wedding-day
Was blackened by funereal fire
Caught from the embers of a pyre;
With Stygian water was I sprayed,
My brow its wreath awry displayed,
And Hymen was invoked in vain
To mingle with my bridal train.
On every city gate there hang
Prayers that have cost me many a pang.
A cloak I'm weaving once again
The fourth to serve your fourth campaign.
Perish the man who started raids
On harmless woods to build stockades,
And made the silence of dead bones
Hoarse with the trumpet's vibrant tones,
Fatuous as Ocnus who, they say,
Interminable ropes of hay
Sat twisting, which behind his stool
Served but as fodder for his mule!
The corselet chafes your arms belike,
Your tender hands the heavy pike;
Yet rather may you suffer so
Than that my husband's neck should show
Where some strange woman's teeth have set
Marks that his wife could ne'er forget.
'Tis said you're thinner: may it be
Your pallor is for want of me!
And I? When shades of evening bring
These nights of bitter hungering,
I fondly kiss whate'er I find
Of weapon you have left behind,
And sigh when over half the bed
I see no coverlet is spread,
And wonder why the birds of morn
Delay so long to hail the dawn.
As wintry night to night succeeds

I work at what my soldier needs,
And to his tunic I apply
Strips cut from webs of Tyrian dye.
I study coloured maps to find
How the wise god the world designed;
And learn where that Araxes flows
That you must conquer from our foes,
And note what leagues the Parthian horse
Part from the nearest watercourse;
What tract in frozen torpor lies,
What festers under sweltering skies,
And which the best of winds may be
To waft your ship to Italy.
One sister's here to share my cares
And my old nurse who falsely swears,
Though pale herself, that wintry flaws
Of your long absence are the cause.
Hippolyta, that savage queen,
With bosom bare in arms was seen,
A happy woman free to don
The military morion.
I would to god a soldier's life
Were open to a Roman wife.
A weight of care I'd be to you
But a good comrade ever true.
Not even would my courage fail
The loftiest Scythian peaks to scale
When Father Ether's keener nip
Deep rivers holds in icy grip.
All love's a mighty power, but most
When one a lawful spouse can boast.
By Venus' own victorious hand
To last for life that flame is fanned,
What is't to me that you out there
A Marshal's purple cloak should wear,
Or that upon your hand a ring
Of crystal gems be glittering?

Here every joyous voice is dumb:
Scarce once a month, when Kalends come,
As is her wont my only maid
The Lares' shrine has open laid.
I like to hear my Glaucis whine;
Her woes distract my thoughts from mine—
None but this puppy holds the right
To occupy your place at night.
I veil with flowers and sacred sprays
Shrines at the crossing of the ways,
And savin crackles while I pray
In temples venerable and grey.
Should e'er the owl's ill-omened screech
From neighbouring wood my hearing reach,
Or should my candle's light decline
And splutter for a drop of wine,
Each omen, good or evil, damns
To instant slaughter yearling lambs
And, gown upgirt, the butcher priest
Stands gloating o'er the coming feast.
When round and round the slings are whirled
And leaden balls in volleys hurled,
And crafty archers, galloping
In feigned retirement, twang the string,
Think not too highly, I beseech,
Of the great glory you may reach
Should you storm Balkh and snatch away
His burnous from some perfumed Bey.
But deem it finer to maintain
Your marriage vows without a stain.
So only should I hope to see,
After your Parthian victory,
A triumph where, with spotless spear,
Following the chariot you appear.
(For otherwise my wish would be
That you had not returned to me)
And when I go to dedicate

Your arms beside the Appian gate
I'll write below 'A grateful wife
To Mars who spared her husband's life.'

Beyond the Grave

BEYOND the grave lies something, not all of us expires;
There is a ghastly phantom that 'scapes the funeral fires.
For lo, I dreamed that Cynthia, then resting with the dead
Beside the noisy roadway, was bending o'er my bed.
'Twas when my sleep seemed filled with the funeral of my dear,
My heart seemed very heavy, my couch was cold and drear.
She had the self-same tresses, her eyes were still the same,
As when the bearers raised her: but on her side the flame
Had gnawed away the vestment, nor had it paused to spare
Her beryl ring—'twas melted, the ring she used to wear.
Her features, too, had flattened—the Stream that flows for aye,
The River of Oblivion, was fretting them away.
The thoughts, the living passion, were Cynthia's very own;
Her breathing self was echoed in every word and tone.
She smote her hands: the gesture was Cynthia yet, when stirred.
Poor hands, so dead and brittle—only the thumbs were heard:
"You traitor! who shall trust you? you have no power to keep
Your faith with any woman. So soon, and you can sleep?
So soon have you forgotten how many nights we met,
The while Subura waketh? So soon could you forget
The rope, my dizzy casement, and how you stood below,
Until you felt my kisses, those nights so long ago!
And how we paused at corners, and loitered in the street?
We loved each other dearly—and stolen love is sweet!
But all those secret vows, as we tarried side by side,

Only the wild winds heard them—and flung them far and wide!
When all grew dark before me, none called to me, 'Oh stay!
Come back!' If you had called me, I should have gained one day.
No watcher shook a rattle where I was lying dead:
The tiles were old and broken, the rain beat on my head.
And last of all, who saw you grief-stricken by my bier?
Who saw you clad in mourning? Who saw you shed one tear?
And though beyond the city it irked you to proceed,
You might have told my bearers from thence to use less speed.
You never cast on perfumes, nor prayed the winds to fan
My fires: no flowers you offered, Oh faithless, thankless man!
Mere hyacinths, costing nothing—not even those you gave,
Not even an humble potsherd to mark my lonely grave!
"Burn Lygdamus! The slave! Heat the metal plates white hot!
My wine hid death; I drank it, and sensed too late the plot.
Seize Nomas' charm of spittle; she 'scaped the former time:
Now, when the live coals wrap them, her hands will tell their crime!
"That cheap, bedizened street-wench, whom any man in Rome
Might mate with for a trifle, is mistress of our home;
And, quite the high-born lady, in skirts that sweep the ground,
All over gold-embroidered, if any slave be found
Who dares to laud my beauty, will pounce upon her prey,
And make her rue her boldness with doubled tasks that day.
My Petale laid roses upon my monument:
A block and chain rewarded the faithful innocent!
Some slight request 'for my sake' poor Lalage once urged:
The girl was stripped, for my sake, hung by the hair, and scourged!
That vampire melts my likeness—you never once complain:

That she might get a dowry, you let me die—again.
"And yet I'll not upbraid you, despite my bitter wrongs:
My reign was long, Propertius, as mistress of your songs.
And by the three weird sisters—so may he greet me fair,
That triple Dog of Hades—I kept my faith, I swear!
If not, let crawling vipers consort where I lie dead;
My tomb shall hear their hissing, my bones shall be their bed.
For on that loathly Stream, two abodes diverse are placed:
Some to the one are sailing, some to the other haste.
In one barge Clytaemestra, with her the Cretan dame,
And eke the wooden portent wherein she hid her shame,
But lo, a crownèd pinnacle—its happy burden sees
Elysian roses yielding their fragrance to the breeze.
There lutes, and Phrygian cymbals, and Lydian lyres resound,
And turbaned dancers foot it in one delightful round.
We see fair Hypermestra, Andromeda too, those wives
Of stainless faith: they tell us the story of their lives
One swears to us the arms which her mother's gyves abused
Were guiltless as the fingers the cold, hard rocks had bruised.
And then the other tells us how she could not commit
The crime her sisters compassed—she had no heart for it.
So with the tears of death all the loves of life are healed:
But half of your offences I never have revealed.
"And now a charge I give you, if I can touch you yet,
If, spite of Doris' philtres, you cannot quite forget:—
Don't let my nurse go hungry, when she is weak and old.
Although she might have done it, she never sought your gold.
And my belovèd Latris, I would not have her stand
Before a second mistress, my mirror in her hand.
And all the verse you wrote me in other, happier days,
Belongs to me—go burn it, and cease to keep my praise!
And guard my grave from ivy: the tendrils grow amain,
And wind around my bones in an ever-tightening chain
And where 'gainst shady hillsides the Anio rests his streams,
And in Alcides' temple that wondrous ivory gleams,

There carve upon a column a poem, such as I
Deserved, but short, that passers may read it as they fly:
'Here lieth Golden Cynthia in Tibur's fair demesne:
This added fame, Oh Anio, thy famous banks have seen.'
"Think not those dreams are false that Elysium sends to you:
When good dreams come, as I have, you may believe them true,
By night, the ghosts flit earthward, the sullen Gates of Doom
Swing wide, and even Cerberus goes prowling through the gloom.
At cockcrow, all the vagrants troop back to Acheron;
The Boatman keeps strict tally, and notes us one by one.
For now, let others have thee; ere long shalt be all mine:
We two shall lie together, my bones shall cling to thine."
She spoke: and in that instant, ere yet I was aware,
The shape my arms were clasping had vanished in thin air.

A Brawl

LAST night a riotous affair
Gave boggy Esquiline a scare
And brought the neighbours scampering out
From the new gardens in a rout—
I'll tell you what 'twas all about.

Lanuvium for years untold
Has been an ancient dragon's hold.
Here may some leisure well be spent
In witnessing a rare event.
A sombre cleft that opens there
Leads steeply to the sacred lair
To which in homage women take
Their offerings to the hungry snake.
(Be wary, virgins, if you go

On such an errand). Deep below
Writhing and hissing he awaits
The tribute of his yearly cates.
Girls sent to celebrate this rite
Turn pale and tremble with affright.
If wantons they'd be wise to pause
Nor trust their hands within his jaws.
A virgin's gift with greed he takes:
Even a virgin's basket shakes,
Though they who've lived without a stain
Go to their parents' arms again.
Then cry the farmers with a cheer
'The harvest will be good this year.'
 My Cynthia drove a dog-cart there
Behind a little bob-tailed pair,
In Juno's service, so she swore:
In Venus' service even more;
The Appian could a tale unfold
How recklessly her axles rolled
Making a glorious display
Over its roughly cobbled way.
A wondrous sight indeed she lent
As o'er the carriage-pole she bent,
And greatly daring shook the reins,
Careering through the slummy lanes,
While all around was heard the din
Of brawling in some backstreet inn—
A spectacle that must impair
My credit, though I was not there.
What need to name that wastrel prig,
His plucked-out beard, his silk-lined gig,
Or mention his Molossian pets
Adorned with jewelled carcanets?
One day he'll sell himself to share
The gladiators' filthy fare,
And then the beard that shames him so
His shaven chin will overgrow.

So often of my bed despoiled,
So often of my pleasure foiled,
I planned to strike my camp and yield
My service in another field.
There lodges on the Aventine
One Phyllis near Diana's shrine;
Never when sober too refined
In drink she leaves all shame behind.
And there is Teia, light o' love,
Whose home is in Tarpeia's grove,
A comely lass, but when she's drunk
No one man can content this punk.
These I invited that I might
Find consolation for a night,
And in a fresh intrigue renew
The furtive things I used to do.
There was one couch for all the three
Concealed behind the greenery.
How lay we? I between the pair:
The wine was Lygdamus' affair,
Methymnian, racy Lesbian juice,
In glasses fit for summer use.
Nile sent the piper: Phyllis played
The castanets: the board was laid
With roses in their natural bloom
Ready to toss about the room.
'Big-un' himself, with limbs like stumps
Contorted into gnarled lumps,
Was there, whose fingers short and thick
Waved to the hollow box-wood's click.
But the full oil-lamps flickering burned,
The trestles gave, the board o'erturned:
The dice-box also played me tricks:
I longed to throw a double six,
But constant loss I had to face:
Always up-popped a double ace.
They sang to deafened ears; they bared

Their breasts to eyes that blindly stared.
My desolate spirit, well-a-day!
Was at Lanuvium far away.
When lo! the front door hinges grate
And there are murmurings at the gate.
So suddenly, it made me start,
The double doors are flung apart,
And Cynthia, with disordered hair
But lovely in her rage, stands there!
My hands relax, the goblet slips,
And ashen grow my wine-stained lips:
Forked lightning through her glances ran,
She stormed as only woman can:
My house presented such a scene
A captured town it might have been.
Phyllis she viciously assails
Scoring her face with all her nails,
And Teia terribly afraid
Shouts to the neighbouring bog for aid.
The links they carried as they fled
Aroused the burghers snug in bed,
And soon the whole street had become
A midnight pandemonium,
The fugitives with tousled locks
And dowdy in unfastened frocks
Into a dingy alley hop
For refuge in the nearest shop.
In triumph she returns to me,
Proud of the spoils of victory,
And scores my cheek with vicious hand,
Upon my neck a crimson brand
She bites, but most her blows descend
Upon my eyes which most offend.
At last when she had tired out
Her arms with banging me about,
Poor Lygdamus, who had ducked to crouch
Behind the left arm of the couch,

Is routed out, and kneels to plead
With my kind soul to intercede.
Ah! Lygdamus, what could I do?
I was as much a slave as you.
At last for terms of peace I treat,
And though I scarce might kiss her feet,
'Since your misconduct you admit,'
She says, 'and beg me pardon it,
Just understand that from this day
These are the rules you must obey.
You shall not, dressed to make a show,
Swagger in Pompey's portico,
Nor when the Forum, sanded down,
Collects the women of the town,
You shall not crane your neck to leer
Up at the circus' topmost tier.
I'll have no dalliance beside
Litters with curtains opened wide.
To auction Lygdamus shall go—
This first of all—to him I owe
All my distress, and he shall train
About his feet a double chain.'
Such were the laws for me she made:
I said 'Your laws shall be obeyed.'
She smiled with pleasure, vastly proud
That to her sovereign will I bowed,
Then set to work to fumigate
The places where the strangers sate,
And pails of cleansing water pour
Over the threshold of the door.
She bade me change my garments twice
And touched my head with sulphur thrice,
The pillows then she rearranged,
And sheet by sheet the bedding changed.
And thus, my reckoning paid, she calmed
And in my double bed disarmed.

Cornelia Speaks from the Grave

"CEASE, Paullus, cease to vex my tomb with tears;
Dark is the door, nor thy entreaties hears.
When once the corpse has entered death's domain
The roads firm closed with adamant remain,
And though thou beg the lord of this grey hall
On the deaf shore thy tears unheeded fall.
Vows move the gods: when Charon has his fee,
The wan gate shuts the grassy pyre for thee.
Such was the meaning of the trumpet's note,
When from the bier my head the burning smote.
What use our marriage, my ancestral car?
Vain all the pledges of my glory are.
Not e'en Cornelia the Fates would spare;
One hand may lift all that is of me there.

Darkness of doom and thou slow marshy tide,
That clogs my feet and bars on every side,
All guiltless was I, though too soon I came,
And from the Father mercy now I claim.
Let Aeacus ascend the judgment seat,
With urn and lots to give the verdict meet,
And let his brothers there on either hand
In the stern court array the Furies' band.
Sisyphus, be still; Ixion, thy circle stay;
Assuage thy thirst, O Tantalus, to-day.
Leave the poor shades, fierce Cerberus, in peace,
And let the chains their endless clamour cease.
I for myself will plead, and if I lie
The Danaids' urn shall be my penalty.

If any wife may boast ancestral fame,
The Afric realm knows our Numantine name;
From Libo's stock my mother's lineage,

Both houses writ in history's golden page.
When bordered robe gives place to marriage fires
And maiden's locks a woman's coif attires,
Then, Paullus, to thy bed in nuptial state
I came, too soon to leave my only mate.
I call upon my grandsires' glorious dust,
Beneath whose statues Africa lies crushed,
And Perseus whom Achilles' anger woke,
And thou who once Achilles' kingdoms broke,
Ne'er did I slight the censor's stern behest,
Nor make our hearth to blush by sin confessed.

No loss from me did those high trophies get;
In our great house I too a pattern set.
Blameless my life, in youth and age unstained;
From torch to torch my honour proud remained.
The laws that nature gave were in my blood,
I needed not a judge to make me good.
Stern though the verdict be when I am tried,
None will be shamed by sitting at my side.
Not Claudia, Cybele's priest serene,
Who drew the rope and moved the crownèd queen,
Nor she whose linen showed a living flame
When Vesta for the fire entrusted came.
Dear mother mine, no harm I did to thee
What wouldst thou wish, save fortune, changed in me?

My mother's tears, the city's sad laments,
And Caesar's grief—here is my sure defence.
For loud he cried, with tears in eyes divine,
—'Worthy she was to be a child of mine.'
I earned the robe by honoured matrons worn:
It was no childless home whence I was born.
My boys yet live, my solace here beneath,
Paullus and Lepidus closed my eyes in death.
Twice did my brother curule office gain,
His consul's year o'er—clouded by death's pain.

My girl her father's censorship shall prove,
Still, like her mother, constant to one love.
Build up our house. I do not fear to die,
While you remain to swell my destiny.
This is the last reward, our triumph won,
When on the tomb the record writes—'Well done.'
And now our children to thee I bequeath,
Fond thoughts that still within my ashes breathe;
Father and mother to them art thou now,
And round thy neck alone their arms they throw.
So when they come in sorrow to thy knee,
The house thy burden, add one kiss for me.
Let them not see thee in thy love's distress,
But with dry cheeks deceive their fond caress.
Thine are the hours of darkness; thine the pain
Of sleep where visions bring my face again,
And oft expectant for my word's reply
Soft wilt thou speak to her thou dreamest nigh.

Perchance the hall shall see another bed,
And to my couch a second wife be led.
But be not vexed, dear children: praise the bride;
Soon by your love will she be pacified.
Nor praise too much your mother nor compare:
Words over-free a look of malice bear.
But if still constant to the dead he stay,
And think my ashes worth that price to pay,
Learn even now to tend his coming age
And let your care his widowed grief assuage.
The years I lost may they to you be lent,
And in my children Paullus find content.
'Tis well: I never mourned a baby dear;
All your fair company arrayed my bier.
My speech is done. Ye witnesses, arise;
While grateful earth repays my sacrifice.
To virtue heaven opens: may I win
A voyage o'er those waves to peace within!"

OVID

Early Days of the World

Of Bodies chang'd to various forms I sing:
Ye Gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat;
Till I my long laborious work compleat;
And add perpetual tenour to my rimes,
Reduc'd from Nature's birth, to Caesar's times.
 Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And Heav'ns high canopy, that covers all,
One was the face of Nature, if a face;
Rather a rude and indigested mass:
A lifeless lump, unfashion'd, and unfram'd;
Of jarring seeds; and justly chaos nam'd.
No sun was lighted up the world to view;
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew:
Nor yet was Earth suspended in the sky;
Nor, pois'd, did on her own foundations lie:
Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown;
But earth and air and water were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
No certain form on any was imprest;
All were confus'd, and each disturb'd the rest.
For hot and cold were in one body fixt,
And soft with hard, and light with heavy mixt.
 But God, or nature, while they thus contend,
To these intestine discords put an end.
Then earth from air, and seas from earth were driv'n,

And grosser air sunk from ethereal heav'n.
Thus disembroil'd, they take their proper place;
The next of kin contiguously embrace,
And foes are sunder'd by a larger space.
The force of fire ascended first on high,
And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky:
Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire:
Whose atoms from unactive earth retire.
Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng
Of pondrous, thick, unwieldy seeds along.
About her coasts, unruly waters roar,
And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.
Thus when the God, what ever God was he,
Had form'd the whole, and made the parts agree,
That no unequal portions might be found,
He moulded earth into a spacious round:
Then with a breath, he gave the winds to blow;
And bad the congregated waters flow.
He adds the running springs, and standing lakes;
And bounding banks for winding rivers makes.
Some part, in earth are swallow'd up, the most
In ample oceans, disimbogu'd, are lost.
He shades the woods, the vallies he restrains
With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.
And as five zones th' ethereal regions bind,
Five correspondent, are to earth assign'd:
The sun, with rays directly darting down,
Fires all beneath, and fries the middle zone:
The two beneath the distant poles complain
Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.
Betwixt th' extremes, two happier climates hold
The temper that partakes of hot and cold.
The fields of liquid air, inclosing all,
Surround the compass of this earthly ball:
The lighter parts lie next the fires above;
The grosser near the watry surface move:
Thick clouds are spread, and storms engender there,

And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,
And winds that on their wings cold winter bear.
Nor were those blustring brethren left at large,
On seas and shores their fury to discharge:
Bound as they are, and circumscrib'd in place,
They rend the world, resistless, where they pass;
And mighty marks of mischief leave behind;
Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.
First Eurus to the rising morn is sent,
(The regions of the balmy continent;)
And Eastern realms, where early Persians run,
To greet the blest appearance of the sun.
Westward, the wanton Zephyr wings his flight;
Pleas'd with the remnants of departing light:
Fierce Boreas with his offspring issues forth,
T' invade the frozen waggon of the North.
While frowning Auster seeks the southern sphere,
And rots with endless rain, th' unwholesome year.
High o'er the clouds, and empty realms of wind,
The God a clearer space for heav'n design'd;
Where fields of light, and liquid ether flow,
Purg'd from the pondrous dregs of earth below.
Scarce had the pow'r distinguish'd these, when straight
The stars, no longer overlaid with weight,
Exert their heads from underneath the mass,
And upward shoot, and kindle as they pass
And with diffusive light, adorn their heav'nly place.
Then, every void of nature to supply,
With forms of gods he fills the vacant sky:
New herds of beasts he sends the plains to share;
New colonies of birds, to people air;
And to their oozy beds the finny fish repair.
A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was man design'd:
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest:
Whether with particles of heav'nly fire

The god of nature did his soul inspire;
Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
And, pliant, still, retain'd th' ethereal energy:
Which wise Prometheus temper'd into paste,
And mixt with living streams, the godlike image cast.
Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthy mother tend,
Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies.
From such rude principles our form began,
And earth was metamorphos'd into man.
The Golden Age was first; when man yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew;
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.
Un-forc'd by punishment, un-aw'd by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere:
Needless was written law, where none opprest;
The law of man was written in his breast:
No suppliant crowds before the judge appear'd:
No court erected yet, nor cause was hear'd;
But all was safe, for conscience was their guard.
The mountain trees in distant prospect please,
E're yet the pine descended to the seas;
E're sails were spread, new oceans to explore;
And happy mortals, unconcern'd for more,
Confin'd their wishes to their native shore.
No walls were yet; nor fence, nor moat nor mound;
Nor drum was heard, nor trumpets' angry sound:
Nor swords were forg'd; but, void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time.
The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow:
Content with food, which Nature freely bred,
On wildings, and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnisht out a feast.
The flow'rs unsown, in fields and meadows reign'd,

And western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years, the bearded corn ensu'd
From earth unask'd, nor was that earth renew'd.
From veins of vallies, milk and nectar broke;
And honey sweating through the pores of oak.
But when good Saturn, banish'd from above,
Was driv'n to Hell, the world was under Jove.
Succeeding times a Silver Age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
Then summer, autumn, winter did appear;
And spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely made,
Good days contracted, and enlarg'd the bad.
Then air with sultry heats began to glow,
The wings of winds were clogg'd with ice and snow;
And shivering mortals, into houses driven,
Sought shelter from th' inclemency of Heav'n.
Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds,
With twining oziers fenc'd; and moss their beds.
Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke,
And oxen labour'd first beneath the yoke.
To this next came in course the Brazen Age:
A warlike offspring prompt to bloody rage,
Not impious yet——
——Hard Steel succeeded then;
And stubborn as the metal, were the men.
Truth, Modesty, and Shame, the world forsook:
Fraud, Avarice, and Force, their places took.
Then sails were spread, to every wind that blew;
Raw were the sailors, and the depths were new:
Trees rudely hollow'd, did the waves sustain;
E're ships in triumph plough'd the watry plain.
Then land-marks limited to each his right:
For all before was common, as the light.
Nor was the ground alone requir'd to bear
Her annual income to the crooked share;
But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,

Digg'd from her entrails first the precious ore;
Which next to Hell the prudent Gods had laid;
And that alluring ill to sight displaid.
Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold:
And double death did wretched man invade,
By steel assaulted, and by gold betray'd.
Now, (brandish'd weapons glitt'ring in their hands)
Mankind is broken loose from moral bands;
No rights of hospitality remain:
The guest by him who harbour'd him, is slain:
The son-in-law pursues the father's life;
The wife her husband murders, he the wife.
The step-dame poison for the son prepares;
The son inquires into his father's years.
Faith flies, and Piety in exile mourns;
And Justice, here opprest, to Heav'n returns.
 Nor were the Gods themselves more safe above;
Against beleagur'd heav'n, the giants move.
Hills piled on hills, on mountains, mountains lie,
To make their mad approaches to the sky.
Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
T' avenge with thunder their audacious crime:
Red light'ning play'd along the firmament,
And their demolish't works to pieces rent.
Sing'd with the flames, and with the bolts transfixt,
With native earth their blood the monsters mixt;
The blood, indu'd with animating heat,
Did in th' impregnant earth, new sons beget:
They, like the seed from which they sprung, accurst,
Against the Gods immortal hatred nurst:
An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood;
Expressing their original from blood.
Which when the King of Gods beheld from high
(Withal revolving in his memory,
What he himself had found on earth of late,
Lycaon's guilt, and his inhuman treat)

He sigh'd; nor longer with his pity strove;
But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove;
Then, call'd a general council of the Gods;
Who summon'd, issue from their blest abodes,
And fill th' assembly, with a shining train.
A way there is, in Heaven's expanded plain,
Which when the skies are clear, is seen below,
And mortals, by the name of Milky, know.
The ground-work is of stars; through which the road
Lies open to the thunderer's abode.
The Gods of greater nations dwell around,
And on the right and left the palace bound;
The commons where they can, the nobler sort,
With winding-doors wide open, front the court.
This place, as far as earth with heav'n may vie,
I dare to call the Loovre of the sky.
When all were plac'd, in seats distinctly known,
And he, their father, had assum'd the throne,
Upon his iv'ry sceptre first he leant,
Then shook his head, that shook the firmament:
Air, earth, and seas, obey'd th' almighty nod;
And with a gen'ral fear, confess'd the God.
At length, with indignation, thus he broke
His awful silence, and the pow'rs bespoke.
"I was not more concern'd in that debate
Of empire, when our universal state
Was put to hazard, and the giant race
Our captive skies were ready to imbrace:
For tho' the foe was fierce, the seeds of all
Rebellion, sprung from one original;
Now wheresoever ambient waters glide,
All are corrupt, and all must be destroy'd.
Let me this holy protestation make,
By Hell, and Hell's inviolable lake,
I try'd whatever in the god-head lay;
But gangreen'd members must be lopt away,
Before the nobler parts are tainted to decay.

There dwells below, a race of demi-gods,
Of nymphs in waters, and of fawns in woods;
Who, tho' not worthy yet, in heav'n to live,
Let 'em, at least, enjoy that earth we give.
Can these be thought securely lodg'd below,
When I my self, who no superior know,
I, who have heav'n and earth at my command,
Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand?"
At this a murmur thro' the synod went,
And with one voice they vote his punishment.
Thus, when conspiring traitors dar'd to doom
The fall of Caesar, and in him of Rome,
The nations trembled, with a pious fear;
All anxious for their earthly thunderer:
Nor was their care, O Caesar! less esteem'd
By thee, than that of Heav'n for Jove was deem'd;
Who with his hand and voice, did first restrain
Their murmurs, then resum'd his speech again.
The Gods to silence were compos'd, and sate
With reverence, due to his superior state.
"Cancel your pious cares; already he
Has paid his debt to Justice, and to me.
Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments were,
Remains for me thus briefly to declare.
The clamours of this vile degenerate age,
The cries of orphans, and th' oppressor's rage,
Had reach'd the stars; I will descend, said I,
In hope to prove this loud complaint a lie.
Disguis'd in human shape, I travell'd round
The world, and more than what I hear'd I found.
O'er Maenalus I took my steepy way,
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey.
Then cross'd Cyllenè, and the piny shade,
More infamous by curst Lycaon made
Dark night had cover'd Heaven and Earth, before
I enter'd his unhospitable door.
Just at my entrance, I display'd the sign

That somewhat was approaching of divine.
The prostrate people pray: the tyrant grins,
And, adding Profanation to his sins,
'I'll try,' said he, 'and if a God appear,
To prove his deity, shall cost him dear.'
'Twas late, the graceless wretch my death prepares,
When I shou'd soundly sleep, opprest with cares:
This dire experiment he chose, to prove
If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove;
But first he had resolv'd to taste my pow'r:
Not long before, but in a luckless hour
Some legates sent from the Molossian state,
Were on a peaceful errand come to treat:
Of these he murders one, he boils the flesh,
And lays the mangl'd morsels in a dish:
Some part he roasts; then serves it up, so drest,
And bids me welcome to this human feast.
Mov'd with disdain, the table I o'er-turn'd;
And with avenging flames, the palace burn'd.
The tyrant in a fright, for shelter, gains
The neighb'ring fields, and scours along the plains.
Howling he fled, and fain he would have spoke,
But human voice his brutal tongue forsook.
About his lips, the gather'd foam he churns,
And breathing slaughters, still with rage he burns,
But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs
Cleaves to his back; a famish'd face he bears;
His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs for chase of prey.
He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns.
His eyes still sparkle in a narr'wer space,
His jaws retain the grin, and violence of his face.
This was a single ruin, but not one
Deserves so just a punishment alone.
Mankind's a monster, and th' ungodly times,

Confed'rate into guilt, are sworn to crimes.
All are alike involv'd in ill, and all
Must by the same relentless fury fall."
Thus ended he; the greater Gods assent,
By clamours urging his severe intent;
The less fill up the cry for punishment.
Yet still with pity they remember man;
And mourn as much as heav'nly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of human birth,
What he wou'd do with all this waste of earth:
If his dispeopl'd world he would resign
To beasts, a mute, and more ignoble line;
Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
If none were left to worship and invoke.
To whom the Father of the Gods reply'd:
"Lay that unnecessary fear aside:
Mine be the care, new people to provide.
I will from wondrous principles ordain
A race unlike the first, and try my skill again."
Already had he toss'd the flaming brand,
And roll'd the thunder in his spacious hand;
Preparing to discharge on seas and land:
But stopp'd, for fear thus violently driv'n,
The sparks should catch his axle-tree of Heav'n.
Rememb'ring, in the Fates, a time when fire
Shou'd to the battlements of Heav'n aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above shou'd burn,
And all th' inferiour globe to cinders turn.
His dire Artill'ry thus dismist, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment:
Concludes to pour a watry deluge down;
And what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.
The Northern breath, that freezes floods, he binds;
With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds
The South he loos'd, who night and horror brings;
And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings.
From his divided beard, two streams he pours;

His head and rhumy eyes distil in showers.
With rain his robe and heavy mantle flow:
And lazy mists are lowring on his brow.
Still as he swept along, with his clench't fist,
He squeez'd the clouds; th' imprison'd clouds resist:
The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound:
And show'rs inlarg'd come pouring on the ground.
Then, clad in colours of a various dye,
Junonian Iris breeds a new supply
To feed the clouds: impetuous rain descends;
The bearded corn beneath the burden bends:
Defrauded clowns deplore their perish'd grain;
And the long labours of the year are vain.
 Nor from his patrimonial heav'n alone
Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down:
Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
To help him with auxiliary waves.
The watry tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
Who roll from mossy caves (their moist abodes;)
And with perpetual urns his palace fill:
To whom in brief, he thus imparts his will.
 Small exhortation needs; your pow'rs employ:
And this bad world, so Jove requires, destroy.
Let loose the reins to all your watry store:
Bear down the dams, and open every door.
 The floods, by nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new command,
Remove the living stones, that stopt their way,
And gushing from their source, augment the sea.
Then, with his mace, their monarch struck the ground:
With inward trembling, Earth receiv'd the wound;
And rising streams a ready passage found.
Th' expanded waters gather on the plain,
They flote the fields, and over-top the grain;
Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
Bear flocks, and folds, and lab'ring hinds away.
Nor safe their dwellings were; for, sapp'd by floods,

Their houses fell upon their household gods.
The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
High o'er their heads, behold a watry wall:
Now seas and earth were in confusion lost;
A world of waters, and without a coast.
One climbs a cliff; one in his boat is born,
And ploughs above, where late he sow'd his corn.
Others o'er chimney tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below:
Or downward driv'n, they bruise the tender vine,
Or tost aloft, are knock't against a pine.
And where of late the kids had cropt the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wondring dolphins o'er the palace glide.
On leaves and masts of mighty oaks they browse.
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frighted wolf now swims amongst the sheep;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep:
His rapid force no longer helps the boar:
The stag swims faster, than he ran before.
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main.
Now hills and vales no more distinction know,
And levell'd nature lies oppress'd below.
The most of mortals perish in the flood:
The small remainder dies for want of food.
A mountain of stupendous height there stands
Betwixt th' Athenian and Boeotian lands,
The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
But then a field of waters did appear:
Parnassus is its name; whose forky rise
Mounts through the clouds, and mates the lofty skies.
High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting, moor'd his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perish'd man; they two were human kind.

The mountain nymphs and Themis they adore,
And from her oracles relief implore.
The most upright of mortal men was he;
The most sincere and holy woman, she.
When Jupiter, surveying Earth from high,
Beheld it in a lake of water lie,
That, where so many millions lately liv'd,
But two, the best of either sex, surviv'd,
He loos'd the northern wind; fierce Boreas flies
To puff away the clouds, and purge the skies·
Serenely, while he blows, the vapours, driven,
Discover Heav'n to Earth, and Earth to Heaven.
The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
On the rough sea, and smooths its furrow'd face,
Already Triton, at his call appears
Above the waves; a Tyrian robe he wears;
And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
And give the waves the signal to retire.
His writhen shell he takes; whose narrow vent
Grows by degrees into a large extent;
Then gives it breath; the blast, with doubling sound,
Runs the wide circuit of the world around.
The sun first heard it, in his early East,
And met the rattling echo's in the West.
The waters, listning to the trumpets' roar,
Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.
A thin circumference of land appears;
And earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds:
The streams, but just contain'd within their bounds,
By slow degrees into their channels crawl
And earth increases as the waters fall.
In longer time the tops of trees appear,
Which mud on their dishonour'd branches bear.
At length the world was all restor'd to view,
But desolate, and of a sickly hue:

Nature beheld herself, and stood aghast,
A dismal desert, and a silent waste.
Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look,
Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke:
"Oh wife, oh sister, oh oh all thy kind
The best and only creature left behind,
By kindred, love, and now by dangers join'd;
Of multitudes, who breath'd the common air,
We two remain; a species in a pair;
The rest the seas have swallow'd; nor have we
Ev'n of this wretched life a certainty.
The clouds are still above; and, while I speak,
A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
Shou'd I be snatch'd from hence, and thou remain,
Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
How cou'd'st thou such a wretched life sustain?
Shou'd I be left, and thou be lost, the sea,
That bury'd her I lov'd, shou'd bury me.
Oh cou'd our father his old arts inspire,
And make me heir of his informing fire,
That so I might abolisht man retrieve,
And perisht people in new souls might live.
But Heav'n is pleas'd, nor ought we to complain,
That we, th' examples of mankind remain."
He said: the careful couple join their tears,
And then invoke the Gods, with pious prayers.
Thus, in devotion having eas'd their grief,
From sacred oracles they seek relief:
And to Cephysus' brook their way pursue:
The stream was troubl'd, but the foord they knew.
With living waters in the fountain bred,
They sprinkle first, their garments, and their head,
Then took the way which to the temple led.
The roofs were all defil'd with moss and mire,
The desert altars void of solemn fire.
Before the gradual, prostrate they ador'd,
The pavement kiss'd, and thus the saint implor'd.

"O righteous Themis, if the pow'rs above
By pray'rs are bent to pity, and to love;
If human miseries can move their mind;
If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
Mankind, and people desolated earth."
Then thus the gracious Goddess, nodding, said;
"Depart, and with your vestments veil your head;
And stooping lowly down, with loosn'd zones,
Throw each behind your backs, your mighty mother's bones."
Amaz'd the pair; and mute with wonder, stand,
Till Pyrrha first refus'd the dire command.
"Forbid it heav'n," said she, "that I shou'd tear
Those holy reliques from the sepulchre."
They ponder'd the mysterious words again,
For some new sense; and long they sought in vain.
At length Deucalion clear'd his cloudy brow,
And said; "The dark enigma will allow
A meaning, which, if well I understand,
From sacrilege will free the God's command:
This earth our mighty mother is, the stones
In her capacious body, are her bones.
These we must cast behind." With hope and fear,
The woman did the new solution hear:
The man diffides in his own augury,
And doubts the Gods; yet both resolve to try.
Descending from the mount, they first unbind
Their vests, and veil'd, they cast the stones behind:
The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
But long tradition makes it pass for true)
Did first the rigour of their kind expell,
And suppl'd into softness as they fell;
Then swell'd, and swelling, by degrees grew warm;
And took the rudiments of human form;
Imperfect shapes: in marble such are seen,
When the rude chisel does the man begin;
While yet the roughness of the stone remains,

Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
Were turn'd to moisture, for the bodies' use:
Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment:
The rest, (too solid to receive a bent;)
Converts to bones; and what was once a vein,
Its former name and nature did retain.
By help of pow'r divine, in little space,
What the man threw, assum'd a manly face;
And what the wife, renew'd the female race.
Hence we derive our nature, born to bear
Laborious life; and harden'd into care.

The rest of animals, from teeming earth
Produc'd, in various forms receiv'd their birth.
The native moisture, in its close retreat,
Digested by the sun's ethereal heat,
As in a kindly womb, began to breed:
Then swell'd and quicken'd by the vital seed.
And some in less, and some in longer space,
Were ripen'd into form, and took a several face.
Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields is fled,
And seeks, with ebbing tides, his ancient bed,
The fat manure with heav'nly fire is warm'd;
And crusted creatures, as in wombs are form'd:
These, when they turn the glebe, the peasants find:
Some rude, and yet unfinish'd in their kind:
Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect birth;
One half alive; and one of lifeless earth.

For heat and moisture, when in bodies join'd,
The temper that results from either kind,
Conception makes; and fighting, till they mix,
Their mingl'd atoms in each other fix.
Thus Nature's hand the genial bed prepares
With friendly discord, and with fruitful wars.

From hence the surface of the ground with mud
And slime besmear'd (the faeces of the flood),
Receiv'd the rays of Heav'n; and sucking in

The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin:
Some were of sev'ral sorts produc'd before;
But of new monsters, earth created more.
Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
Thee, Python too, the wondring world to fright,
And the new nations, with so dire a sight.
So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
Did his vast body, and long train embrace
Whom Phoebus basking on a bank espy'd,
E're now the God his arrows had not try'd,
But on the trembling deer, or mountain goat;
At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.
Though every shaft took place, he spent the store
Of his full quiver; and 'twas long before
Th' expiring serpent wallow'd in his gore.
Then, to preserve the fame of such a deed,
For Python slain, he Pythian games decreed,
Where noble youths for mastership shou'd strive,
To quoit, to run, and steeds and chariots drive.
The prize was fame: in witness of renown,
An oaken garland did the victor crown.
The laurel was not yet for triumphs born,
But every green, alike by Phoebus worn,
Did with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.
The first and fairest of his loves was she,
Whom not blind fortune, but the dire decree
Of angry Cupid forc'd him to desire:
Daphne her name, and Peneus was her sire,
Swell'd with the pride, that new success attends,
He sees the stripling, while his bow he bends,
And thus insults him: "Thou lascivious boy,
Are arms like these, for children to employ?
Know, such achievements are my proper claim:
Due to my vigour and unerring aim:
Resistless are my shafts, and Python late,
In such a feather'd death, has found his fate.
Take up thy torch, (and lay my weapons by;)

With that the feeble souls of lovers fry."
To whom the son of Venus thus reply'd:
"Phoebus, thy shafts are sure on all beside;
But mine on Phoebus, mine the fame shall be
Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee."
He said, and soaring swiftly wing'd his flight;
Nor stopt but on Parnassus' airy height.
Two diff'rent shafts he from his quiver draws;
One to repel desire, and one to cause.
One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold,
To bribe the love, and make the lover bold:
One blunt, and tipt with lead, whose base allay
Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.
The blunted bolt against the nymph he drest:
But with the sharp, transfixt Apollo's breast.
Th' enamour'd deity pursues the chase;
The scornful damsel shuns his loath'd embrace;
In hunting beasts of prey her youth employs;
And Phoebe rivals in her rural joys.
With naked neck she goes, and shoulders bare,
And with a fillet binds her flowing hair.
By many suitors sought, she mocks their pains,
And still her vow'd virginity maintains.
Impatient of a yoke, the name of bride
She shuns, and hates the joys she never try'd.
On wilds and woods she fixes her desire:
Nor knows what youth and kindly love inspire.
Her father chides her oft: "Thou ow'st," says he,
"A husband to thy self, a son to me."
She, like a crime, abhors the nuptial bed:
She glows with blushes, and she hangs her head.
Then, casting round his neck her tender arms,
Soothes him with blandishments, and filial charms:
"Give me, my lord," she said, "to live and die
A spotless maid, without the marriage tie.
'Tis but a small request; I beg no more
Than what Diana's father gave before."

The good old sire was softn'd to consent;
But said her wish wou'd prove her punishment:
For so much youth, and so much beauty join'd,
Oppos'd the state, which her desires design'd.
The god of light, aspiring to her bed,
Hopes what he seeks, with flattering fancies fed:
And is, by his own oracles mis-led.
And as in empty fields, the stubble burns,
Or nightly travellers, when day returns,
Their useless torches on dry hedges throw,
That catch the flames, and kindle all the row;
So burns the God, consuming in desire,
And feeding in his breast a fruitless fire:
Her well-turn'd neck he view'd (her neck was bare)
And on her shoulders her dishevel'd hair:
Oh were it comb'd, said he, with what a grace
Wou'd every waving curl become her face!
He view'd her eyes, like heavenly lamps that shone;
He view'd her lips, too sweet to view alone,
Her taper fingers, and her panting breast;
He praises all he sees, and for the rest,
Believes the beauties yet unseen are best:
Swift as the wind, the damsel fled away,
Nor did for these alluring speeches stay:
"Stay, nymph," he cry'd, "I follow not a foe:
Thus from the lion trips the trembling doe:
Thus from the wolf the frightn'd lamb removes,
And, from pursuing faulcons, fearful doves;
Thou shunn'st a god, and shunn'st a god that loves.
Ah lest some thorn shou'd pierce thy tender foot,
Or thou shou'd'st fall in flying my pursuit!
To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline;
Abate thy speed, and I will bate of mine.
Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly fly;
Nor basely born, nor shepherd's swain am I.
Perhaps thou know'st not my superior state;
And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.

Me Claros, Delphos, Tenedos obey,
These hands the Patareian scepter sway.
The King of Gods begot me: what shall be,
Or is, or ever was, in Fate, I see.
Mine is th' invention of the charming lyre;
Sweet notes, and heav'nly numbers I inspire.
Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart;
But ah more deadly his, who pierc'd my heart.
Med'cine is mine, what herbs and simples grow
In fields and forests, all their pow'rs I know;
And am the great physician call'd, below.
Alas that fields and forests can afford
No remedies to heal their love-sick lord!
To cure the pains of love, no plant avails;
And his own physic the physician fails."
 She heard not half; so furiously she flies,
And on her ear th' imperfect accent dies.
Fear gave her wings; and as she fled, the wind
Increasing spread her flowing hair behind;
And left her legs and thighs expos'd to view;
Which made the God more eager to pursue.
The God was young, and was too hotly bent
To lose his time in empty compliment:
But led by love, and fir'd with such a sight,
Impetuously pursu'd his near delight.
 As when th' impatient greyhound slipt from far,
Bounds o'er the glebe, to course the fearful hare,
She in her speed does all her safety lay;
And he with double speed pursues the prey;
O'er-runs her at the sitting turn, and licks
His chaps in vain, and blows upon the flix,
She scapes, and for the neighb'ring covert strives,
And gaining shelter, doubts if yet she lives:
If little things with great we may compare,
Such was the God, and such the flying fair:
She urg'd by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urg'd by love.

He gathers ground upon her in the chase:
Now breaths upon her hair, with nearer pace;
And just is fast'ning on the wish'd embrace.
The nymph grew pale, and in a mortal fright,
Spent with the labour of so long a flight;
And now despairing, cast a mournful look,
Upon the streams of her paternal brook:
"Oh help," she cry'd, "in this extremest need,
If water gods are deities indeed:
Gape, earth and this unhappy wretch intomb:
Or change my form whence all my sorrows come."
Scarce had she finish'd, when her feet she found
Benumb'd with cold, and fasten'd to the ground:
A filmy rind about her body grows,
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs:
The nymph is all into a laurel gone,
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.
Yet Phoebus loves her still, and, casting round
Her bole, his arms, some little warmth he found.
The tree still panted in the unfinish'd part,
Not wholly vegetive, and heav'd her heart.
He fix'd his lips upon the trembling rind;
It swerv'd aside, and his embrace declin'd.
To whom the God: "Because thou canst not be
My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree:
Be thou the prize of honour and renown;
The deathless poet, and the poem crown.
Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
And, after poets, be by victors worn.
Thou shalt returning Caesar's triumph grace;
When pomps shall in a long procession pass:
Wreath'd on the posts before his palace wait;
And be the sacred guardian of the gate:
Secure from thunder, and unharm'd by Jove,
Unfading as th' immortal pow'rs above:
And as the locks of Phoebus are unshorn,
So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn."

The grateful tree was pleas'd with what he said,
And shook the shady honours of her head.
An ancient forest in Thessalia grows;
Which Tempe's pleasing valley does inclose:
Through this the rapid Peneus takes his course;
From Pindus rolling with impetuous force:
Mists from the rivers' mighty fall arise;
And deadly damps inclose the cloudy skies:
Perpetual fogs are hanging o'er the wood;
And sounds of waters deaf the neighbourhood.
Deep, in a rocky cave, he makes abode:
(A mansion proper for a mourning God.)
Here he gives audience; issuing out decrees
To rivers, his dependant deities.
On this occasion hither they resort,
To pay their homage, and to make their court.
All doubtful, whether to congratulate
His daughter's honour, or lament her fate.
Sperchaeus, crown'd with poplar, first appears;
Then old Apidanus came crown'd with years:
Enipeus turbulent, Amphrisos tame;
And Aeas, last with lagging waters, came.
Then, of his kindred brooks a numerous throng
Condole his loss, and bring their urns along.
Not one was wanting of the watry train,
That fill'd his flood, or mingl'd with the main:
But Inachus, who, in his cave, alone,
Wept not another's losses, but his own.
For his dear Io, whether stray'd, or dead,
To him uncertain, doubtful tears he shed.
He sought her through the world, but sought in vain;
And, nowhere finding, rather fear'd her slain.
Her, just returning from her father's brook,
Jove had beheld, with a desiring look;
"And, oh fair daughter of the flood," he said,
"Worthy alone of Jove's imperial bed,
Happy, whoever shall those charms possess;

The King of Gods, nor is thy lover less,
Invites thee to yon cooler shades; to shun
The scorching rays of the meridian sun.
Nor shalt thou tempt the dangers of the grove
Alone, without a guide; thy guide is Jove.
No puny pow'r, but he whose high command
Is unconfin'd, who rules the seas and land;
And tempers thunder in his awful hand.
Oh fly not;" (for she fled from his embrace,)
O'er Lerna's pastures he pursu'd the chase,
Along the shades of the Lyrnaean plain;
At length the God, who never asks in vain,
Involv'd with vapours, imitating night,
Both air and earth; and then suppress'd her flight,
And mingling force with love, enjoy'd the full delight.
Meantime the jealous Juno, from on high,
Survey'd the fruitful fields of Arcady;
And wonder'd that the mist shou'd over-run
The face of daylight, and obscure the sun.
No nat'ral cause she found, from brooks, or bogs,
Or marshy lowlands, to produce the fogs:
Then round the skies she sought for Jupiter;
Her faithless husband; but no Jove was there.
Suspecting now the worst, "Or I," she said,
"Am much mistaken, or am much betray'd."
With fury she precipitates her flight,
Dispels the shadows of dissembled night,
And to the day restores his native light.
Th' almighty lecher, careful to prevent
The consequence, foreseeing her descent
Transforms his mistress in a trice; and now
In Io's place appears a lovely cow.
So slick her skin, so faultless was her make,
Ev'n Juno did unwilling pleasure take
To see so fair a rival of her love;
And what she was, and whence, enquir'd of Jove:
"Of what fair herd, and from what pedigree?"

The God, half caught, was forc'd upon a lie;
And said she sprung from earth; she took the word,
And begg'd the beauteous heifer of her lord.
What should he do? 'twas equal shame to Jove
Or to relinquish, or betray his love:
Yet to refuse so slight a gift, wou'd be
But more t' increase his consort's jealousy:
Thus fear, and love, by turns his heart assail'd;
And stronger love had sure at length prevail'd,
But some faint hope remain'd, his jealous queen
Had not the mistress through the heifer seen.
The cautious Goddess, of her gift possesst,
Yet harbour'd anxious thoughts within her breast;
As she who knew the falsehood of her Jove,
And justly fear'd some new relapse of love
Which to prevent, and to secure her care,
To trusty Argus she commits the fair.
The head of Argus (as with stars the skies)
Was compass'd round, and wore an hundred eyes.
But two by turns their lids in slumber steep;
The rest on duty still their station keep;
Nor cou'd the total constellation sleep.
Thus, ever present, to his eyes and mind,
His charge was still before him, tho' behind.
In fields he suffer'd her to feed by day,
But when the setting sun to night gave way,
The captive cow he summon'd with a call,
And drove her back, and ty'd her to the stall.
On leaves of trees and bitter herbs she fed,
Heav'n was her canopy, bare earth her bed;
So hardly lodg'd: and to digest her food,
She drank from troubl'd streams, defil'd with mud.
Her woeful story fain she wou'd have told,
With hands upheld, but had no hands to hold.
Her head to her ungentle keeper bow'd,
She strove to speak; she spoke not, but she low'd:
Affrighted with the noise, she look'd around,

And seem'd t' inquire the author of the sound.
Once on the banks where often she had play'd,
(Her father's banks) she came, and there survey'd
Her alter'd visage, and her branching head;
And, starting, from her self she wou'd have fled.
Her fellow nymphs, familiar to her eyes,
Beheld, but knew her not in this disguise.
Ev'n Inachus himself was ignorant;
And in his daughter did his daughter want.
She follow'd where her fellows went, as she
Were still a partner of the company:
They stroke her neck; the gentle heifer stands,
And her neck offers to their stroking hands.
Her father gave her grass; the grass she took;
And lick'd his palms, and cast a piteous look;
And in the language of her eyes, she spoke.
She wou'd have told her name, and ask't relief,
But wanting words, in tears she tells her grief.
Which, with her foot she makes him understand;
And prints the name of Io in the sand.
"Ah wretched me!" her mournful father cry'd;
She, with a sigh, to 'wretched me' reply'd:
About her milk-white neck his arms he threw;
And wept, and then these tender words ensue.
"And art thou she, whom I have sought around
The world, and have at length so sadly found?
So found is worse than lost: with mutual words
Thou answer'st not, no voice thy tongue affords:
But sighs are deeply drawn from out thy breast;
And speech deny'd, by lowing is express'd.
Unknowing I, prepar'd thy bridal bed;
With empty hopes of happy issue fed.
But now the husband of a herd must be
Thy mate, and bell'wing sons thy progeny.
Oh, were I mortal, death might bring relief!
But now my god-head but extends my grief;
Prolongs my woes, of which no end I see,

And makes me curse my immortality."
More had he said, but fearful of her stay,
The starry guardian drove his charge away,
To some fresh pasture; on a hilly height
He sate himself, and kept her still in sight.
Now Jove no longer cou'd her suff'rings bear:
But call'd in haste his airy messenger,
The son of Maia, with severe decree
To kill the keeper, and to set her free.
With all his harness soon the God was sped;
His flying hat was fast'ned on his head;
Wings on his heels were hung, and in his hand
He holds the virtue of the snaky wand.
The liquid air his moving pinions wound,
And, in the moment, shoot him on the ground.
Before he came in sight, the crafty god
His wings dismiss'd, but still retain'd his rod:
That sleep-procuring wand wise Hermes took,
But made it seem to sight, a shepherd's hook.
With this he did a herd of goats control;
Which by the way he met, and slily stole.
Clad like a country swain, he pip'd, and sung;
And playing drove his jolly troop along.
With pleasure, Argus the musician heeds;
But wonders much at those new vocal reeds.
And, "Whosoe're thou art, my friend," said he,
"Up hither drive thy goats, and play by me:
This hill has browse for them, and shade for thee."
The god, who was with ease induc'd to climb,
Began discourse to pass away the time;
And still, betwixt, his tuneful pipe he plies;
And watch'd his hour, to close the keeper's eyes.
With much ado, he partly kept awake;
Not suff'ring all his eyes repose to take:
And ask'd the stranger, who did reeds invent,
And whence began so rare an instrument?
Then Hermes thus; a nymph of late there was,

Whose heav'nly form her fellows did surpass.
The pride and joy of fair Arcadia's plains;
Belov'd by deities, ador'd by swains:
Syrinx her name, by Sylvans oft pursu'd,
As oft she did the lustful gods delude:
The rural, and the woodland pow'rs disdain'd;
With Cynthia hunted, and her rites maintain'd;
Like Phoebe clad, even Phoebe's self she seems,
So tall, so straight, such well-proportion'd limbs:
The nicest eye did no distinction know,
But that the goddess bore a golden bow:
Distinguish'd thus, the sight she cheated too.
Descending from Lycaeus, Pan admires
The matchless nymph, and burns with new desires.
A crown of pine upon his head he wore;
And thus began her pity to implore.
But e're he thus began, she took her flight
So swift, she was already out of sight.
Nor staid to hear the courtship of the god;
But bent her course to Ladon's gentle flood:
There by the river stopt, and, tir'd before,
Relief from water nymphs her pray'rs implore.
Now while the lustful god, with speedy pace,
Just thought to strain her in a strict embrace,
He fills his arms with reeds, new rising on the place.
And while he sighs his ill-success to find,
The tender canes were shaken by the wind;
And breath'd a mournful air, unhear'd before;
That much surprising Pan, yet pleas'd him more.
Admiring this new music, thou, he said,
Who can'st not be the partner of my bed,
At least shalt be the consort of my mind;
And often, often, to my lips be join'd.
He form'd the reeds, proportion'd as they are:
Unequal in their length, and wax'd with care,
They still retain the name of his ungrateful fair.
While Hermes pip'd, and sung, and told his tale,

The keeper's winking eyes began to fail,
And drowsy slumber on the lids to creep;
Till all the watchman was, at length, asleep.
Then soon the god his voice and song suppress't;
And with his pow'rful rod confirm'd his rest:
Without delay his crooked faulchion drew,
And at one fatal stroke the keeper slew.
Down from the rock, fell the dissever'd head,
Opening its eyes in death, and falling bled;
And mark'd the passage with a crimson trail:
Thus Argus lies in pieces, cold and pale;
And all his hundred eyes, with all their light,
Are clos'd at once in one perpetual night.
These Juno takes, that they no more may fail,
And spreads them in her peacock's gaudy tail.
 Impatient to revenge her injur'd bed,
She wreaks her anger on her rival's head;
With furies frights her from her native home,
And drives her gadding, round the world to roam:
Nor ceas'd her madness and her flight, before
She touch'd the limits of the Pharian shore.
At length, arriving on the banks of Nile,
Weary'd with length of ways, and worn with toil,
She laid her down: and, leaning on her knees,
Invok'd the cause of all her miseries:
And cast her languishing regards above,
For help from heav'n, and her ungrateful Jove.
She sigh'd, she wept, she low'd, 'twas all she cou'd;
And with unkindness seem'd to tax the God.
Last, with an humble pray'r, she begg'd repose,
Or death at least to finish all her woes.
Jove heard her vows, and with a flatt'ring look,
In her behalf, to jealous Juno spoke.
He cast his arms about her neck, and said:
"Dame, rest secure; no more thy nuptial bed
This nymph shall violate; by Styx I swear,
And every oath that binds the Thunderer."

The goddess was appeas'd: and at the word
Was Io to her former shape restor'd.
The rugged hair began to fall away;
The sweetness of her eyes did only stay,
Tho' not so large; her crooked horns decrease;
The wideness of her jaws and nostrils cease:
Her hoofs to hands return, in little space:
The five long taper fingers take their place;
And nothing of the heifer now is seen,
Beside the native whiteness of the skin.
Erected on her feet she walks again,
And two the duty of the four sustain.
She tries her tongue, her silence softly breaks,
And fears her former lowings when she speaks:
A goddess now through all th' Egyptian state;
And serv'd by priests, who in white linen wait.
 Her son was Epaphus, at length believ'd
The son of Jove, and as a God receiv'd:
With sacrifice ador'd, and public pray'rs,
He common temples with his mother shares.
Equal in years, and rival in renown
With Epaphus, the youthful Phaeton,
Like honour claims, and boasts his sire the sun.
His haughty looks, and his assuming air
The son of Isis cou'd no longer bear:
"Thou tak'st thy mother's word too far," said he,
"And hast usurp'd thy boasted pedigree.
Go base pretender to a borrow'd name."
Thus tax'd, he blush'd with anger, and with shame;
But shame repress'd his rage: the daunted youth
Soon seeks his mother, and inquires the truth:
"Mother," said he, "this infamy was thrown
By Epaphus on you, and me your son.
He spoke in public, told it to my face;
Nor durst I vindicate the dire disgrace:
Ev'n I, the bold, the sensible of wrong,
Restrain'd by shame, was forc'd to hold my tongue.

To hear an open slander is a curse:
But not to find an answer, is a worse.
If I am heav'n-begot, assert your son
By some sure sign; and make my father known,
To right my honour, and redeem your own."
He said, and saying cast his arms about
Her neck, and begg'd her to resolve the doubt.
'Tis hard to judge if Clymenè were mov'd
More by his pray'r, whom she so dearly lov'd,
Or more with fury fir'd, to find her name
Traduc'd, and made the sport of common fame.
She stretch'd her arms to heav'n, and fix'd her eyes
On that fair planet, that adorns the skies;
"Now by those beams," said she, "whose holy fires
Consume my breast, and kindle my desires;
By him who sees us both, and cheers our sight,
By him the public minister of light,
I swear that Sun begot thee: if I lie,
Let him his cheerful influence deny:
Let him no more this perjur'd creature see;
And shine on all the world, but only me:
If still you doubt your mother's innocence,
His eastern mansion is not far from hence;
With little pains you to his levè go,
And from himself your parentage may know."
With joy th' ambitious youth his mother heard,
And eager, for the journey soon prepar'd.
He longs the world beneath him to survey;
To guide the chariot; and to give the day:
From Meroë's burning sands he bends his course,
Nor less in India feels his father's force;
His travel urging, till he came in sight,
And saw the palace by the purple light.

The Cave of Envy

MINERVA to the Cave of Envy sped.—
Dark, hideous with black gore, her dread abode
Is hidden in the deepest hollowed cave,
In utmost limits where the genial sun
May never shine, and where the breathing winds
May never venture; dismal, bitter cold,
Untempered by the warmth of welcome fires,
Involved forever in abounding gloom.

When the fair champion came to this abode
She stood before its entrance, for she deemed
It not a lawful thing to enter there:
And she whose arm is mortal to her foes,
Struck the black door-posts with her pointed spear,
And shook them to the center. Straight the doors
Flew open, and, behold, within was Envy
Ravening the flesh of vipers, self-begot,
The nutriment of her depraved desires.—

When the great Goddess met her evil gaze
She turned her eyes away. But Envy slow,
In sluggish languor from the ground uprose,
And left the scattered serpents half-devoured;
Then moving with a sullen pace approached.—
And when she saw the gracious Goddess, girt
With beauty and resplendent in her arms,
She groaned aloud and fetched up heavy sighs.

Her face is pale, her body long and lean,
Her shifting eyes glance to the left and right,
Her snaggle teeth are covered with black rust,
Her hanging paps o'erflow with bitter gall,
Her slavered tongue drips venom to the ground;

Busy in schemes and watchful in dark snares
Sweet sleep is banished from her blood-shot eyes;
Her smiles are only seen when others weep;
With sorrow she observes the fortunate,
And pines away as she beholds their joy;
Her own existence is her punishment,
And while tormenting she torments herself.

Narcissus

THERE was a pool with silvery water bright,
To which no neat herd e'er his cattle drave;
No she-goats feeding on the mountain height,
Nor wandering sheep disturbed the unruffled wave.
No bird or beast came near its thirst to fill,
No falling branches broke the mirror still.

Worn with the chase, Narcissus laid him down
In the lush grass that grew along the brink,
Beneath the shadow by cool poplars thrown,
And stooping o'er the spring prepared to drink.
When lo! another beauty met his gaze
That did another thirst within him raise.

For as he bent a wonder came to view:
An imaged face that set his heart on fire;
An incorporeal hope, a joy untrue,
Shadow of substance, phantom of desire.
Entranced he lies in ecstasy alone
Like some slim statue carved of Parian stone.

Flung down he marvels at those stars, his eyes,
And at his locks than Bacchus' own more fair;
He sees the roses and the ivories
Of neck and cheek and lips beyond compare.

Now loves he that which others in him love,
And on himself his passion fain would prove.

How often did he stoop to kiss the pool
That mocked his lips; how often with his arm
Seek in the depths beneath the surface cool
To draw towards his lips the shadowed charm.
He knows not what he sees; but still he burns,
And to the fond illusion still returns.

O foolish boy, why seek to clasp in vain
A fleeting image! Nowhere wilt thou find
Thy heart's desire; nothing will remain
Shouldst thou endure to leave the pool behind.
'Tis but a shade reflected thou dost see,
And if thou turnest 'twill return with thee.

Yet naught could draw him from that lonely place,
No thought of food, or sleep at eventide.
Ever he gazed upon the mirrored face
And with the vision ne'er was satisfied.
Until at last he rose, and to the trees
Bewailed his mournful fate in words like these:

'Ye woods, where lovers ever shelter find,
Have you a grief than mine more cruel known,
Or found a heart so vexed by fate unkind
In all the long years that you here have grown?
I see—yet what I see may not obtain.
I love—and yet deluded love in vain.

And still—O grief!—we are not parted now
By roads or hills or walls with close shut gates.
If but the water passage would allow
He too expectant on my coming waits.
For when I stretched my lips towards the spring
He strove to mine his upturned face to bring.

So slight the barrier that between us lay
 I almost might have touched his rosy cheek.
Come, my beloved, come to me, I pray:
 Fly not from me when I your presence seek
You need not shun me. I am young and fair
And nymphs have begged me oft their couch to share

Your kindly looks have hope within me bred.
 I stretch my arms; and you stretch yours to mine.
I weep; you seem at once to droop your head.
 I smile; your eyes with laughter gayly shine.
And in the movements of your lips I guess
An answer to the words that I address.

Ah! now I know the truth. I, I am he!
 It is my very self that I desire,
And my own image in the fountain see.
 I lit the flame that burns me with its fire;
What can I do? Be lover now or loved?
Beggared by my own wealth, yet helpless proved.

O would that from myself I might escape—
 Strange, strange petition!—Would he were not here,
That love of mine, and had another shape
 From that which to my eyes now seems so dear.
Full soon, methinks, from this sore load of grief
My very agony will bring relief.

For I must die: and then my pain will end.
 Only I wish that he might longer live.
Two deaths in this one blow will Fortune send
 And to two loving hearts destruction give.
Alas, alas! I cannot bear my doom:
My life is done ere it had reached its bloom.

Salmacis and Hermaphroditus

No SPEAR she ever holds, no painted quiver;
Never her time in hunting will she pass;
She bathes her comely limbs within her river
And has its water for a looking glass;
With boxwood comb she combs her flowing tresses
And wrapped in lucent robe the herbage presses.

Often she gathers flowers; and on that day
With picking posies she beguiled her leisure,
When she beheld the boy, and lo, straightway
Resolved to take her fill of amorous pleasure.
But first she pranked her dress and smoothed her face,
And called to help her all her beauty's grace.

Then thus did she begin: "A god in sooth,
And if a god, then Cupid here I see!
Happy thy mother and thy sister both,
Happy the nurse who gave her breast to thee!
But happier far than all thy promised bride
Whom thou shalt deign to welcome to thy side.

If such there be, let mine be stolen joy;
If not, let us in wedlock be united."
So spoke the naiad; but the timid boy
Blushed rosy red, his innocence despited—
For never yet of wedlock had he dreamed—
And as he blushed to her more lovely seemed.

As ofttimes in a sunny orchard close
Half hid by leaves ripe apples we espy;
As painted ivories their whiteness lose;
As the moon reddens in the evening sky

When the loud cymbals clash to bring her aid;
So were the lad's soft cheeks like roses made.

"Give me at least," she cried, "a brother's kiss"—
 And sought her arms around his neck to throw.
"Have done," said he, "I love not ways like this;
 Have done, or I will leave this place and you."
The nymph affrighted feigned to go away,
And in a neighbouring thicket hidden lay.

The boy imagined that he was alone,
 And dipped his feet within the lapping wave;
And stripping naked, now that she was gone,
 Prepared in the cool stream his limbs to lave.
Spellbound the maid upon his beauty looked
With eyes ablaze, and scarce concealment brooked.

Then with clapped hands he plunged into the pool
 And with alternate strokes began to swim.
An ivory statue set in crystal cool,
 A lily seems he on the river's brim.
'Victory!' the naiad cries, and diving down
All naked takes the intruder for her own.

In vain he strives: she holds him closely pressed,
 Stealing a kiss meanwhile, with arms thrown round him.
Fondly she touches his unwilling breast
 And will not let him go now she has found him.
E'en as a serpent in an eagle's hold
Seeks with soft coils her captor to enfold.

And borne aloft entwines his beating wings
 And wraps herself around his claws and head;
Or e'en as ivy to a tree trunk clings
 Or as a polyp on the ocean's bed
On every side puts greedy suckers out
And holds his prisoner compassed all about.

But yet the stubborn boy denies her will
Nor can she gain the joy wherefor she craves,
Until at last close fastened to him still
She draws him down beneath the placid waves
And cries: "Strive as you may, you shall not go.
Join him to me, yet gods, and keep us so."

Her wish was granted. Even as she prayed
A change came over them, by heaven's might,
Of their two forms a single shape was made
Which did their bodies twain in one unite,
No longer two, a man and woman, deemed;
Of either sex or neither now they seemed.

Pyramus and Thisbe

In all the East there lived no comelier pair
Than Pyramus and Thisbe, none more fair
In the great city with its walls of clay
Kiln-burnt, where once Semiramis held sway.
Neighbours they dwelt, their houses side by side,
By nearness first and friendship's ties allied
Till years brought love. In truth they would have made
A happy couple; but their sires forbade.
And even then, despite their parents' ire,
Their hearts still burned alike with mutual fire,
Though none would help and looks and gestures sad
Were all the food their hidden passion had.

At last they found a chink which none had seen
Within their party-wall—love made them keen
Of vision and to them the hole revealed
Which all the bygone years had lain concealed—
A trusty channel for their speech, where through
Soft words of love might pass and whispers low.
Oft when they stood, thus parted yet so near,

And caught each other's breath with eager ear;
'O cruel, cruel wall'—they both would sigh,
'Why dost thou still our union deny?
One fond embrace, how small a thing were this!
Seems it too much? Then grant at least one kiss;
And earn our further thanks; for well we wot,
That 'tis through thee our words have passage got.'
So would they talk, and ere 'Good night' they said,
A kiss unfelt upon the wall they laid.

Aurora now had put the stars to flight
And on the herbage dried the hoar-frost white,
When to their chink they came, still grieving sore
And vowed that they could bear their pain no more.
'This night,' they whispered, 'while our guardians sleep
And all is still, we from the house will creep
Into the open fields about the town
Hard by the mount where Ninus' tomb is shown,
And rest in shadow 'neath the mulberry tall
Which stands, with snow-white fruit a mark for all,
Beside the running spring.' Such was their plan:
And all too slow that day the long hours ran,
Until at last the sun in Ocean's bed
Sank, and from Ocean dark night raised her head.

Then Thisbe oped the door and with veiled face
Went all unnoticed to their trysting-place,
And by the tomb sat down beneath the tree,
Made bold by love. But in the darkness, see
A lioness, her jaws adrip with blood,
Who to the spring side came and drinking stood.
The maiden looked, and to the cavern sped
Leaving her cloak behind her as she fled.
The beast, with thirst allayed, the garment found,
Its owner safe, and dragged it o'er the ground
With bloody jaws and rent it all around.
The youth drew near; and at that grievous sight,

The cloak besmeared with blood, cried loud, "This night
Shall bring two lovers to their death, for she
Deserved to live: she died for love of me.
Mine is the fault: why did I bid her come
To face these dangers and to leave her home
While I was absent? Come, ye lions, rend
My guilty limbs as well, and make an end:
Or else this sword upon me death shall send."

So did he speak, and took the mangled gown
To where the shadow of the tree was thrown.
He kissed the stuff, and cried as his tears fell—
"You shall be reddened by my blood as well;"
Then at the word drew forth his trusty blade,
And with one thrust an end of living made.
His blood gushed out like water from the main,
When some lead pipe has broken with the strain
And lets the captive stream to heaven rise,
Escaping from the hissing orifice.
The tree ensanguined with the crimson dye
Was reddened to its roots; and that is why
Still runs with blood the juice of mulberry.

Baucis and Philemon

Thus Achelous ends: his audience hear
With admiration, and admiring, fear
The pow'rs of heav'n; except Ixion's son,
Who laugh'd at all the gods, believ'd in none:
He shook his impious head, and thus replies,
"These legends are no more than pious lies:
You attribute too much to heavenly sway,
To think they give us forms, and take away."
The rest, of better minds, their sense declar'd
Against this doctrine, and with horrour heard.
Then Lelex rose, an old experienc'd man,

And thus with sober gravity began:
"Heav'n's pow'r is infinite: earth, air, and sea,
The manufacture mass, the making pow'r obey:
By proof to clear your doubt; in Phrygian ground
Two neighb'ring trees, with walls encompass'd round,
Stand on a mod'rate rise, with wonder shown,
One a hard oak, a softer linden one:
I saw the place and them, by Pittheus sent
To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's government.
Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant:
Here Jove with Hermes came; but in disguise
Of mortal men conceal'd their deities;
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod;
And many toilsome steps together trod;
For harbour at a thousand doors they knock'd,
Not one of all the thousand but was lock'd.
At last an hospitable house they found,
A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,
Was thatch'd with reeds and straw together bound.
There Baucis and Philemon liv'd, and there
Had liv'd long married and a happy pair:
Now old in love, though little was their store,
Inur'd to want, their poverty they bore,
Nor aim'd at wealth, professing to be poor.
For master or for servant here to call,
Was all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obey'd.
From lofty roofs the Gods repuls'd before,
Now stooping, enter'd through the little door:
The man (their hearty welcome first express'd)
A common settle drew for either guest,
Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
But e'er they sat, officious Baucis lays
Two cushions stuff'd with straw, the seat to raise;
Coarse, but the best she had; then rakes the load

Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
The living coals, and, lest they should expire,
With leaves and barks she feeds her infant-fire:
It smokes, and then with trembling breath she blows,
Till in a cheerful blaze the flames arose.
With brush-wood and with chips she strengthens these,
And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus form'd, she sets the kettle on,
(Like burnish'd gold the little seether shone)
Next took the coleworts which her husband got
From his own ground (a small well-water'd spot;)
She stripp'd the stalks of all their leaves, the best
She cull'd, and then with handy-care she dress'd.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon seiz'd it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which for their sakes alone he wish'd were more.
This in the pot he plung'd without delay,
To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
The time between, before the fire they sat,
And shorten'd the delay by pleasing chat.

A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
Hung by the handle, on a driven nail:
This fill'd with water, gently warm'd, they set
Before their guests; in this they bath'd their feet,
And after with clean towels dry'd their sweat:
This done, the host produc'd the genial bed,
Sallow the feet, the borders, and the sted,
Which with no costly coverlet they spread;
But coarse old garments, yet such robes as these
They laid alone, at feasts, on holydays.
The good old huswife tucking up her gown,
The table sets; th' invited gods lie down.
The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,

Who thrusts beneath the limping leg, a sherd,
So was the mended board exactly rear'd:
Then rubb'd it o'er with newly-gather'd mint,
A wholesome herb, that breath'd a grateful scent.
Pallas began the feast, where first were seen
The party-colour'd olive, black and green:
Autumnal cornels next in order serv'd,
In lees of wine well pickl'd, and preserv'd:
A garden-salad was the third supply,
Of endive, radishes, and succory:
Then curds and cream, the flow'r of country-fare,
And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care
Turn'd by a gentle fire, and roasted rear.
All these in earthen ware were serv'd to board;
And next in place, an earthen pitcher, stor'd
With liquor of the best the cottage cou'd afford.
This was the table's ornament and pride,
With figures wrought: like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
Varnish'd with wax without, and lin'd within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepar'd,
And to the table sent the smoking lard;
On which with eager appetite they dine,
A sav'ry bit, that serv'd to relish wine:
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately press'd.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plums, apples, nuts, and of their wintry store,
Dry figs, and grapes, and wrinkl'd dates were set
In canisters, t' enlarge the little treat
All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
Which in the midst the country banquet crown'd:
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face:
In all they did, you might discern with ease,
A willing mind, and a desire to please.
Meantime the beechen bowls went round, and still,

Though often empty'd, were observ'd to fill;
Fill'd without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danc'd about the board.
Devotion seiz'd the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increas'd;
And up they held their hands, and fell to pray'r,
Excusing, as they cou'd, their country fare.
One goose they had, ('twas all they cou'd allow)
A wakeful sent'ry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow:
Her, with malicious zeal, the couple view'd;
She ran for life, and limping they pursu'd:
Full well the fowl perceiv'd their bad intent,
And wou'd not make her masters compliment;
But persecuted, to the pow'rs she flies,
And close between the legs of Love she lies.
He with a gracious ear the suppliant heard,
And sav'd her life; then what he was declar'd,
And own'd the god. 'The neighbourhood,' said he,
'Shall justly perish for impiety:
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way:
Leave these accurs'd; and to the mountain's height
Ascend; nor once look backward in your flight.'
They haste, and what their tardy feet deny'd,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supply'd.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes;
Lost in a lake the floated level lies:
A watry desert covers all the plains,
Their cot alone, as in an isle, remains:
Wondring with weeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours' fate, and country now no more,
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increas'd, in height and bulk to grow.

A stately temple shoots within the skies:
The crotches of their cot in columns rise:
The pavement polish'd marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture grac'd, the spires and tiles of gold.
Then thus the sire of gods, with look serene,
'Speak thy desire, thou only just of men;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound.'
A while they whisper; then, to Jove address'd,
Philemon thus prefers their joint request:
'We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
And offer at your altars rites divine:
And since not any action of our life
Has been polluted with domestic strife,
We beg one hour of death; that neither she
With widow's tears may live to bury me,
Nor weeping I, with wither'd arms may bear
My breathless Baucis to the sepulcher.'
The godheads sign their suit. They run their race
In the same tenor all th' appointed space;
Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
These past adventures at the temple-gate,
Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
Sprouting with sudden leaves of spritely green:
Old Baucis look'd where old Philemon stood,
And saw his lengthen'd arms a sprouting wood:
New roots their fasten'd feet begin to bind,
Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind:
Then e'er the bark above their shoulders grew,
They give and take at once their last adieu;
At once, farewell, O faithful spouse, they said;
At once th' incroaching rinds their closing lips invade.
Ev'n yet, an ancient Tyanaean shows
A spreading oak, that near a linden grows:
The neighbourhood confirm the prodigie,
Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
I saw myself the garlands on their boughs,

And tablets hung for gifts of granted vows;
And off'ring fresher up, with pious pray'r,
The good, said I, are God's peculiar care,
And such as honour heav'n, shall heav'nly honour share.

Iphis and Ianthe

THE FAME of this, perhaps, through Crete had flown;
But Crete had newer wonders of her own,
In Iphis chang'd; for near the Gnossian bounds,
(As loud report the miracle resounds)
At Phaestus dwelt a man of honest blood,
But meanly born, and not so rich as good;
Esteem'd and lov'd by all the neighbourhood:
Who to his wife, before the time assign'd
For child-birth came, thus bluntly spoke his mind:
"If heav'n," said Lygdus, "will vouchsafe to hear,
I have but two petitions to prefer;
Short pains for thee, for me a son and heir.
Girls cost as many throes in bringing forth;
Beside, when born, the tits are little worth:
Weak puling things, unable to sustain
Their share of labour, and their bread to gain.
If, therefore, thou a creature shalt produce,
Of so great charges, and so little use,
(Bear witness, heav'n, with what reluctancy)
Her hapless innocence I doom to die."
He said, and tears the common grief display,
Of him who bade, and her who must obey.
 Yet Telethusa still persists, to find
Fit arguments to move a father's mind;
T' extend his wishes to a larger scope,
And in one vessel not confine his hope.
Lygdus continues hard: her time drew near,
And she her heavy load cou'd scarcely bear;
When slumb'ring, in the latter shades of night,

Before th' approaches of returning light
She saw, or thought she saw, before her bed,
A glorious train, and Isis at their head:
Her moony horns were on her forehead plac'd,
And yellow sheaves her shining temples grac'd:
A mitre for a crown, she wore on high;
The dog and dappl'd bull were waiting by;
Osiris, sought along the banks of Nile;
The silent God; the sacred crocodile;
And, last, a long procession moving on,
With timbrels, that assist the lab'ring moon.
Her slumbers seem'd dispell'd, and, broad awake,
She heard a voice that thus distinctly spake:
"My votary, thy babe from death defend,
Nor fear to save whate'er the Gods will send.
Delude with art thy husband's dire decree;
When danger calls, repose thy trust on me;
And know thou hast not serv'd a thankless deity."
This promise made; with night the goddess fled:
With joy the woman wakes, and leaves her bed:
Devoutly lifts her spotless hands on high;
And prays the pow'rs their gift to ratify.
 Now grinding pains proceed to bearing throes,
Till its own weight the burden did disclose.
'Twas of the beauteous kind; and brought to light
With secrecy, to shun the father's sight.
Th' indulgent mother did her care employ;
And pass'd it on her husband for a boy.
The nurse was conscious of the fact alone;
The father paid his vows, as for a son;
And call'd him Iphis, by a common name,
Which either sex with equal right may claim.
Iphis his grandsire was: the wife was pleas'd,
Of half the fraud by Fortune's favour eas'd:
The doubtful name was us'd without deceit
And truth was cover'd with a pious cheat.
The habit shew'd a boy, the beauteous face

With manly fierceness mingled female grace.
Now thirteen years of age were swiftly run,
When the fond father thought the time drew on
Of settling in the world his only son.
Ianthe was his choice; so wondrous fair,
Her form alone with Iphis cou'd compare:
A neighbour's daughter of his own degree,
And not more blest with Fortune's goods than he.
They soon espous'd: for they with ease were join'd,
Who were before contracted in the mind.
Their age the same, their inclinations too;
And bred together, in one school they grew.
Thus, fatally dispos'd to mutual fires,
They felt, before they knew, the same desires.
Equal their flame, unequal was their care:
One lov'd with hope, one languish'd in despair.
The maid accus'd the ling'ring days alone:
For whom she thought a man, she thought her own.
But Iphis bends beneath a greater grief:
As fiercely burns, but hopes for no relief.
Ev'n her despair adds fuel to her fire;
A maid with madness does a maid desire.
And, scarce refraining tears, "Alas!" said she,
"What issue of my love remains for me!
How wild a passion works within my breast,
With what prodigious flames am I possest!
Cou'd I the care of providence deserve,
Heav'n must destroy me, if it wou'd preserve.
And that's my fate, or sure it wou'd have sent
Some usual evil for my punishment:
Not this unkindly curse; to rage and burn,
Where nature shews no prospect of return
Nor cows for cows consume with fruitless fire:
Nor mares, when hot, their fellow mares desire:
The father of the fold supplies his ewes;
The stag through secret woods his hind pursues;
And birds for mates the males of their own species choos

Her females nature guards from female flame;
And joins two sexes to preserve the game:
Wou'd I were nothing, or not what I am!
Crete fam'd for monsters wanted of her store,
Till my new love produc'd one monster more.
The daughter of the sun a bull desir'd,
And yet ev'n then a male a female fir'd:
Her passion was extravagantly new:
But mine is much the madder of the two.
To things impossible she was not bent,
But found the means to compass her intent.
To cheat his eyes, she took a different shape;
Yet still she gain'd a lover, and a leap.
Shou'd all the wit of all the world conspire,
Shou'd Daedalus assist my wild desire,
What art can make me able to enjoy,
Or what can change Ianthe to a boy?
Extinguish then thy passion, hopeless maid,
And recollect thy reason for thy aid.
Know what thou art, and love as maidens ought;
And drive these golden wishes from thy thought.
Thou canst not hope thy fond desires to gain;
Where hope is wanting, wishes are in vain.
 And yet no guards against our joys conspire;
No jealous husband hinders our desire:
My parents are propitious to my wish
And she her self consenting to the bliss.
All things concur to prosper our design:
All things to prosper any love but mine.
And yet I never can enjoy the fair:
'Tis past the pow'r of heav'n to grant my pray'r.
Heav'n has been kind, as far as heav'n can be;
Our parents with our own desires agree,
But nature, stronger than the gods above,
Refuses her assistance to my love.
She sets the bar, that causes all my pain:
One gift refus'd makes all their bounty vain.

And now the happy day is just at hand,
To bind our hearts in Hymen's holy band:
Our hearts, but not our bodies: thus, accurs'd,
In midst of water I complain of thirst.
Why com'st thou, Juno, to these barren rites,
To bless a bed, defrauded of delights?
And why shou'd Hymen lift his torch on high,
To see two brides in cold embraces lie?"
Thus love-sick Iphis her vain passion mourns:
With equal ardour fair Ianthe burns:
Invoking Hymen's name, and Juno's pow'r,
To speed the work, and haste the happy hour.
She hopes, while Telethusa fears the day;
And strives to interpose some new delay:
Now feigns a sickness, now is in a fright
For this bad omen, or that boding sight.
But having done whate'er she cou'd devise,
And empty'd all her magazine of lies,
The time approach'd; the next ensuing day
The fatal secret must to light betray.
Then Telethusa had recourse to pray'r,
She and her daughter with dishevell'd hair:
Trembling with fear, great Isis they ador'd;
Embrac'd her altar, and her aid implor'd.
"Fair queen, who dost on fruitful Egypt smile,
Who sway'st the sceptre of the Pharian isle,
And sev'n-fold falls of disembogueing Nile;
Relieve, in this our last distress," she said,
"A suppliant mother, and a mournful maid.
Thou, Goddess, thou wert present to my sight;
Reveal'd I saw thee, by thy own fair light:
I saw thee in my dream, as now I see
With all thy marks of awful majesty:
The glorious train, that compass'd thee around;
And heard the hollow timbrels holy sound.
Thy words I noted, which I still retain;
Let not thy sacred oracles be vain.

That Iphis lives, that I myself am free
From shame, and punishment, I owe to thee.
On thy protection all our hopes depend:
Thy counsel sav'd us, let thy pow'r defend."
 Her tears pursu'd her words, and while she spoke.
The goddess nodded, and her altar shook:
The temple doors, as with a blast of wind,
Were heard to clap; the lunar horns, that bind
The brows of Isis, cast a blaze around;
The trembling timbrel made a murm'ring sound.
 Some hopes these happy omens did impart;
Forth went the mother with a beating heart:
Not much in fear, nor fully satisfi'd;
But Iphis follow'd with a larger stride:
The whiteness of her skin forsook her face;
Her looks emboldn'd, with an awful grace:
Her features and her strength together grew,
And her long hair to curling locks withdrew.
Her sparkling eyes with manly vigour shone;
Big was her voice, audacious was her tone.
The latent parts, at length reveal'd, began
To shoot, and spread, and burnish into man.
The maid becomes a youth; no more delay
Your vows, but look, and confidently pay.
Their gifts, the parents to the temple bear:
The votive tables this inscription wear:
Iphis, the man, has to the goddess paid
The vows, that Iphis offer'd, when a maid.
 Now when the star of day had shewn his face.
Venus and Juno with their presence grace
The nuptial rites, and Hymen from above
Descended to complete their happy love:
The Gods of marriage lend their mutual aid;
And the warm youth enjoys the lovely maid.

Pygmalion

PYGMALION loathing their lascivious life,
Abhorr'd all womankind, but most a wife:
So single chose to live, and shunn'd to wed,
Well pleas'd to want a consort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercis'd his happy skill;
And carv'd in iv'ry such a maid, so fair,
As nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work; but in her own defence,
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleas'd with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and last, the thing ador'd, desires.
A very virgin in her face was seen,
And had she mov'd, a living maid had been:
One wou'd have thought she could have stirr'd, but strove
With modesty, and was asham'd to move.
Art hid with art, so well perform'd the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit:
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore,
And still the more he knows it, loves the more:
The flesh, or what so seems, he touches oft,
Which feels so smooth, that he believes it soft.
Fir'd with this thought, at once he strain'd the breast,
And on the lips a burning kiss impress'd.
'Tis true, the harden'd breast resists the gripe,
And the cold lips return a kiss unripe:
But when, retiring back, he look'd again,
To think it iv'ry, was a thought too mean:
So wou'd believe she kiss'd, and courting more,
Again embrac'd her naked body o'er;
And straining hard the statue, was afraid
His hands had made a dint, and hurt his maid:
Explor'd her, limb by limb, and fear'd to find

So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind:
With flatt'ry now he seeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts, (the pow'rful bribes of love:)
He furnishes her closet first; and fills
The crowded shelves with rarities of shells;
Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
And all the sparkling stones of various hue:
And parrots, imitating human tongue,
And singing-birds in silver cages hung;
And ev'ry fragrant flow'r, and od'rous green,
Were sorted well, with lumps of amber laid between:
Rich, fashionable robes her person deck:
Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck:
Her taper'd fingers too with rings are grac'd,
And an embroider'd zone surrounds her slender waist.
Thus like a queen array'd, so richly dress'd,
Beauteous she shew'd, but naked shew'd the best.
Then, from the floor, he rais'd a royal bed,
With cov'rings of Sidonian purple spread:
The solemn rites perform'd, her calls her bride,
With blandishments invites her to his side,
And as she were with vital sense possess'd,
Her head did on a plumy pillow rest.

The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
To which the Cypriots due devotion pay;
With gilded horns the milk-white heifers led,
Slaughter'd before the sacred altars, bled:
Pygmalion off'ring, first approach'd the shrine,
And then with pray'rs implor'd the pow'rs divine:
"Almighty gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant;
Make this fair statue mine," he would have said,
But chang'd his words for shame; and only pray'd,
"Give me the likeness of my iv'ry maid."

The golden goddess, present at the pray'r,
Well knew he meant th' inanimated fair,
And gave the sign of granting his desire;

For thrice in cheerful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his mistress, hies,
And, impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breast, by the dear statue lies.
He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks and thinks they redden at the kiss:
He thought them warm before: nor longer stays,
But next his hand on her hard bosom lays:
Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It seem'd, the breast beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print,
'Twas flesh, but flesh so firm, it rose against the dint:
The pleasing task he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more soft at ev'ry touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chafing hands reduce
The former mass to form, and frame for use
He would believe, but yet is still in pain,
And tries his argument of sense again,
Presses the pulse, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinc'd, o'erjoy'd, his studied thanks and praise,
To her who made the miracle, he pays:
Then lips to lips he join'd; now freed from fear,
He found the savour of the kiss sincere:
At this the waken'd image op'd her eyes,
And view'd at once the light and lover, with surprise.
The goddess present at the match she made,
So bless'd the bed, such fruitfulness convey'd,
That e'er ten moons had sharpen'd either horn,
To crown their bliss, a lovely boy was born;
Paphos his name, who, grown to manhood, wall'd
The city Paphos, from the founder call'd.

The Palace of Sleep

THERE is a mountain in Cimmeria's lands
That holds within its sides a cavern deep.

Sunless at dawn, at noon, at eve it stands
The home and hiding-place of laggard sleep.
Soft coiling vapours breathe forth from the ground
And veils of darkness cast their shade around.

No wakeful cock upon its murky wall
With lifted crest proclaims the rising day;
No hissing geese give out their heedful call;
No watch-dog breaks the silence with his bay;
No wolves, no sheep, no human voices rude,
No rustling leaves disturb the quietude.

'Tis the abode of rest. Dark Lethe's stream
Invites to slumber, murmuring in the gloom,
With waters that themselves entrancèd seem;
And by the entrance countless poppies bloom
From whose rich juices dewy night distils
Sleep, and the earth with drowsy effluence fills.

There is no doorway there whose creaking hinge
Might intermit the silence as it turns
And on the stillness of the night impinge,
Nor porter there his watchful taper burns.
But in the midmost cave is set a bed,
Dark hued and soft and with black covers spread.

Thereon the god himself a-dreaming lies,
His limbs relaxed at ease in languorous rest,
While empty visions flit before his eyes
In endless company about him pressed,
Unnumbered as the sands beside the main,
As leaves upon the trees, as ears of grain.

To him fair Iris came and brushed aside
The phantom shapes that would have barred her way
Awakened by the gleam the dull god sighed
And his closed eyes to open did essay.

And scarce at length from his own self set free
He asked:—'Why, maiden, hast thou come to me?'

'O Sleep, thou rest for all things, Sleep most kind,
Balm of the soul,' she said, 'who drivest grief
In flight, and solace for our toils canst find
So that in thee we ever have relief,
Fashion a dream and let it straightway go
And to Alcyone the shipwreck show.'

Tarquin's Rape of Lucrece

MEANWHILE the prince with love is all on fire,
Slave to a passion that he yet must hide;
Her native beauty fans his fierce desire,
Her grace, her golden locks, her milk-white side,
Her voice, the tender words that she replied;
And though he knows he cannot tempt to sin,
The less he hopes, the more he longs to win.

Cockcrow had gone before the lords return.
And now Lucretia is far away;
But still with thoughts of her his senses burn
And round her image all his fancies play:
So did she sit, he thinks, so yesterday
She spun her wool, thus were her ringlets drest
And thus unbound upon her neck did rest.

Her words, her looks come back to him again;
He sees her blushing cheeks, her ivory brow.
Absence inflames his heart's delicious pain;
'Twas yesterday, but he beholds her now
And the sweet vision sets his soul aglow.
E'en as the sea will not from tossing cease
Albeit the wind that roused it sinks in peace.

And so he yields to thoughts of sinful love,
Planning to take by force her spotless bed.
'Who cares,' he cries, 'success may doubtful prove,
But daring feet by heaven's hand are led
Aright, as erst at Gabii I sped.
I will dare all.' Then to his stalwart side
His sword he girt and off on horseback hied.

That eve he came as kinsman to the home
Of Collatinus, foe disguised as friend.
And she, poor innocent, to see him come
Rejoiced and thought her husband did him send
And that she must a courteous welcome lend.
Supper she made for him who was to be
That very night her treacherous enemy.

For when the feast was done and darkness kept
Men's slumbers, from its sheath his sword he took
And forced the door where chaste Lucretia slept
And o'er her head the gleaming falchion shook,
One hand upon the couch, and ruthless spoke:—
'Behold, Lucretia, this deadly blade;
I am prince Tarquin and must be obeyed.'

Silent she stays; no strength has she for words,
Bewildered in a turmoil of surprise;
Her faltering tongue no utterance affords,
A lamb before the wolf his victim lies
Gazing upon him, with appealing eyes.
What can she do? To strive she is too weak,
And his fell blade forbids her aid to seek.

Fain would she fly if now she had the power,
But by the bed her cruel lover stands,
Who had by guile assailed the nuptial bower,
And presses down with his relentless hands
Upon her breast within its linen bands,

The breast that till that hour had never known
The touch of any man except her own.

With prayers and threats and promises he plied her;
But prayers and threats and promises were vain,
Until he vowed that he would lay beside her
Some groom whom he in her embrace had ta'en
And in just wrath the guilty varlet slain.
Then honour made her to dishonour yield
And filthy lust deflowered that stainless field.

Triumphant he rejoices o'er his prey,
His thoughts by fiery passion tempest tossed.
He knows not that his power has passed away
Nor what that night's enjoyment shall him cost,
His kingdom shattered, his dominion lost.
Proud Tarquin, soon thy throne shall be cast down
And thou with all thy lineage overthrown.

So the day dawned. She sits with hair flung wild
Like some sad mother mourning by the pyre
Where burns the body of her only child;
Then calls her husband and her aged sire,
Swift from the camp they come at her desire,
And see her plight and fain the cause would know,
'Who, pray, is dead? Whose hand has struck this blow?'

For long she speaks no word and veils her cheek
All red with blushes in her matron's gown,
The while her husband and her father seek
To staunch the tears that like a stream run down,
Hiding the fear that has within them grown.
Thrice would she speak; and thrice in vain she tries
Until at last with downcast face she cries—

'Shall Tarquin make me dumb as well as shamed?
Shall I to him this second insult owe?

By my own lips my sin shall be proclaimed.
What care I now although the whole world know
The story of my loss and cruel woe?'
Then what she can she tells: her tears reveal
The rest that modesty would still conceal.

Her sire and husband hear the grievous tale
And—'Lo, we freely pardon';—to her cry,
'Against such force no woman could prevail.'
But to their words she sadly made reply—
'The grace you grant I to myself deny.'
Then with a hidden knife she pierced her breast
And at her father's feet sank down to rest.

Canace to Macareus

If STREAMING blood my fatal letter stain,
Imagine, e're you read, the writer slain;
One hand the sword, and one the pen imploys,
And in my lap the ready paper lies.
Think in this posture thou behold'st me write:
In this my cruel father wou'd delight.
O were he present, that his eyes and hands
Might see and urge the death which he commands!
Than all his raging winds more dreadful, he,
Unmov'd, without a tear, my wounds wou'd see.
Jove justly plac'd him on a stormy throne,
His people's temper is so like his own.
The north and south, and each contending blast,
Are underneath his wide dominion cast:
Those he can rule; but his tempestuous mind
Is, like his airy kingdom, unconfin'd.
Ah! what avail my kindred gods above,
That in their number I can reckon Jove!
What help will all my heav'nly friends afford,
When to my breast I lift the pointed sword?

That hour, which join'd us, came before its time:
In death we had been one without a crime,
Why did thy flames beyond a brother's move?
Why lov'd I thee with more than sister's love?
For I lov'd too; and, knowing not my wound,
A secret pleasure in thy kisses found:
My cheeks no longer did their colour boast,
My food grew loathsome, and my strength I lost:
Still e're I spoke, a sigh wou'd stop my tongue;
Short were my slumbers, and my nights were long.
I knew not from my love these griefs did grow,
Yet was, alas, the thing I did not know.
My wily nurse, by long experience found,
And first discover'd to my soul its wound.
'Tis love, said she; and then my downcast eyes,
And guilty dumbness, witness'd my surprize.
Forc'd at the last, my shameful pain I tell:
And, oh, what follow'd, we both know too well!
When half denying, more than half content,
Embraces warm'd me to a full consent,
Then with tumultuous joys my heart did beat,
And guilt, that made them anxious, made them great.
But now my swelling womb heav'd up my breast,
And rising weight my sinking limbs opprest.
What herbs, what plants, did not my nurse produce,
To make abortion by their pow'rful juice?
What med'cines try'd we not, to thee unknown?
Our first crime common; this was mine alone.
But the strong child, secure in his dark cell,
With nature's vigour, did our arts repell.
And now the pale-fac'd Empress of the Night
Nine times had fill'd her orb with borrow'd light:
Not knowing 'twas my labour, I complain
Of sudden shootings, and of grinding pain
My throes came thicker, and my cries increast,
Which with her hand the conscious nurse supprest.
To that unhappy fortune was I come,

Pain urg'd my clamours, but fear kept me dumb.
With inward struggling I restrain'd my cries,
And drunk the tears that trickled from my eyes.
Death was in sight, Lucina gave no aid;
And ev'n my dying had my guilt betray'd.
Thou cam'st; and in thy count'nance sate despair;
Rent were thy garments all, and torn thy hair:
Yet, feigning comfort, which thou cou'dst not give,
(Prest in thy arms, and whispr'ing me to live:)
For both our sakes, (said'st thou) preserve thy life;
Live, my dear sister, and my dearer wife.
Rais'd by that name, with my last pangs I strove:
Such pow'r have words, when spoke by those we love.
The babe, as if he heard what thou hadst sworn,
With hasty joy sprung forward to be born.
What helps it to have weather'd out one storm?
Fear of our father does another form.
High in his hall, rock'd in a chair of state,
The king with his tempestuous council sate.
Through this large room our only passage lay,
By which we cou'd the new-born babe convey.
Swath'd in her lap, the bold nurse bore him out,
With olive branches cover'd round about;
And, mutt'ring pray'rs, as holy rites she meant,
Through the divided crowd unquestion'd went.
Just at the door, th' unhappy infant cried:
The grandsire heard him, and the theft he spy'd.
Swift as a whirl-wind to the nurse he flies,
And deafs his stormy subjects with his cries.
With one fierce puff he blows the leaves away:
Expos'd the self-discovered infant lay.
The noise reach'd me, and my presaging mind
Too soon its own approaching woes divin'd.
Not ships at sea with winds are shaken more,
Nor seas themselves, when angry tempests roar,
Than I, when my loud father's voice I hear:
The bed beneath me trembled with my fear.

He rush'd upon me, and divulg'd my stain;
Scarce from my murther cou'd his hands refrain.
I only answer'd him with silent tears;
They flow'd: my tongue was frozen up with fears.
His little grand-child he commands away,
To mountain wolves and every bird of prey.
The babe cried out, as if he understood,
And beg'd his pardon with what voice he cou'd.
By what expressions can my grief be shown?
(Yet you may guess my anguish by your own)
To see my bowels, and, what yet was worse,
Your bowels too, condemn'd to such a curse!
Out went the king; my voice its freedom found,
My breasts I beat, my blubber'd cheeks I wound.
And now appear'd the messenger of death;
Sad were his looks, and scarce he drew his breath,
To say, 'Your father sends you'—(with that word
His trembling hands presented me a sword:)
'Your father sends you this; and lets you know,
That your own crimes the use of it will show.'
Too well I know the sense those words impart:
His present shall be treasur'd in my heart.
Are these the nuptial gifts a bride receives?
And this the fatal dow'r a father gives?
Thou god of marriage, shun thy own disgrace,
And take thy torch from this detested place:
Instead of that, let furies light their brands,
And fire my pile with their infernal hands.
With happier fortune may my sisters wed;
Warn'd by the dire example of the dead.
For thee, poor babe, what crime cou'd they pretend?
How cou'd thy infant innocence offend?
A guilt there was; but, oh, that guilt was mine!
Thou suffer'st for a sin that was not thine.
Thy mother's grief and crime! but just enjoy'd,
Shown to my sight, and born to be destroy'd!
Unhappy off-spring of my teeming womb!

Drag'd head-long from thy cradle to thy tomb!
Thy un-offending life I could not save,
Nor weeping cou'd I follow to thy grave!
Nor on thy tomb could offer my shorn hair;
Nor show the grief which tender mothers bear.
Yet long thou shalt not from my arms be lost;
For soon I will o'ertake thy infant ghost.
But thou, my love, and now my love's despair,
Perform his funerals with paternal care.
His scatter'd limbs with my dead body burn;
And once more join us in the pious urn.
If on my wounded breast thou drop'st a tear,
Think for whose sake my breast that wound did bear;
And faithfully my last desires fulfill,
As I perform my cruel father's will.

Helen to Paris

WHEN loose epistles violate chaste eyes,
She half consents, who silently denies:
How dares a stranger with designs so vain,
Marriage and hospitable rights profane?
Was it for this, your fleet did shelter find
From swelling seas, and ev'ry faithless wind?
(For tho' a distant country brought you forth,
Your usage here was equal to your worth.)
Does this deserve to be rewarded so?
Did you come here a stranger or a foe?
Your partial judgment may perhaps complain,
And think me barbarous for my just disdain;
Ill-bred then let me be, but not unchaste
Nor my clear fame with any spot defac'd.
Tho' in my face there's no affected frown,
Nor in my carriage a feign'd niceness shown,
I keep my honor still without a stain,
Nor has my love made any coxcomb vain.

Your boldness I with admiration see;
What hope had you to gain a queen like me?
Because a hero forc'd me once away
Am I thought fit to be a second prey?
Had I been won, I had deserv'd your blame,
But sure my part was nothing but the shame.
Yet the base theft to him no fruit did bear,
I 'scap'd unhurt by any thing but fear.
Rude force might some unwilling kisses gain,
But that was all he ever could obtain.
You on such terms would ne'er have let me go;
Were he like you, we had not parted so.
Untouch'd the youth restor'd me to my friends,
And modest usage made me some amends.
'Tis virtue to repent a vicious deed,
Did he repent, that Paris might succeed?
Sure 'tis some fate that sets me above wrongs,
Yet still exposes me to busy tongues.
I'll not complain; for who's displeas'd with love,
If it sincere, discreet, and constant prove?
But that I fear; not that I think you base,
Or doubt the blooming beauties of my face;
But all your sex is subject to deceive,
And ours alas, too willing to believe.
Yet others yield; and love o'ercomes the best:
But why should I not shine above the rest?
Fair Leda's story seems at first to be
A fit example ready found for me.
But she was cozen'd by a borrow'd shape,
And under harmless feathers felt a rape:
If I should yield, what reason could I use?
By what mistake the loving crime excuse?
Her fault was in her pow'rfull lover lost;
But of what Jupiter have I to boast?
Tho' you to heroes and to kings succeed,
Our famous race does no addition need;
And great alliances but useless prove

To one that comes herself from mighty Jove.
Go then, and boast in some less haughty place
Your Phrygian blood, and Priam's ancient race;
Which I wou'd shew I valu'd, if I durst;
You are the fifth from Jove, but I the first.
The crown of Troy is pow'rful I confess;
But I have reason to think ours no less.
Your letter fill'd with promises of all,
That men can good, and women pleasant call,
Gives expectation such an ample field,
As wou'd move goddesses themselves to yield.
But if I e'er offend great Juno's laws,
Yourself shall be the dear, the only cause
Either my honour I'll to death maintain,
Or follow you, without mean thoughts of gain.
Not that so fair a present I despise;
We like the gift, when we the giver prize.
But 'tis your love moves me, which made you take
Such pains, and run such hazards for my sake;
I have perceiv'd (though I dissembled too)
A thousand things that love has made you do.
Your eager eyes would almost dazzle mine,
In which (wild man) your wanton thoughts wou'd shine.
Sometimes you'd sigh, sometimes disorder'd stand,
And with unusual ardor, press my hand;
Contrive just after me to take the glass,
Nor wou'd you let the least occasion pass:
Which oft I fear'd, I did not mind alone,
And blushing sate for things which you have done:
Then murmur'd to myself, he'll for my sake
Do any thing; I hope 'twas no mistake.
Oft have I read within this pleasing grove,
Under my name, those charming words, I Love.
I frowning seem'd not to believe your flame,
But now, alas, am come to write the same.
If I were capable to do amiss,
I could not but be sensible of this.

For oh! your face has such peculiar charms,
That who can hold from flying to your arms!
But what I ne'er can have without offence,
May some blest maid possess with innocence.
Pleasure may tempt, but virtue more should move;
O learn of me to want the thing you love.
What you desire is sought by all mankind:
As you have eyes, so others are not blind.
Like you they see, like you my charms adore:
They wish not less, but you dare venture more.
Oh! had you then upon our coasts been brought,
My virgin love when thousand rivals sought,
You had I seen, you should have had my voice;
Nor could my husband justly blame my choice.
For both our hopes, alas you come too late!
Another now is master of my fate.
More to my wish I cou'd have liv'd with you,
And yet my present lot can undergo.
Cease to solicit a weak woman's will,
And urge not her you love, to so much ill.
But let me live contented as I may,
And make not my unspotted fame your prey.
Some right you claim, since naked to your eyes
Three Goddesses disputed beauty's prize:
One offer'd valour, t'other crowns; but she
Obtain'd her cause, who smiling promis'd me.
But first I am not of belief so light,
To think such nymphs wou'd shew you such a sight:
Yet granting this, the other part is feign'd;
A bribe so mean your sentence had not gain'd.
With partial eyes I shou'd my self regard,
To think that Venus made me her reward:
I humbly am content with human praise;
A Goddess's applause would envy raise:
But be it as you say; for, 'tis confest,
The men, who flatter highest, please us best.
That I suspect it, ought not to displease;

For miracles are not believ'd with ease.
One joy I have, that I had Venus' voice;
A greater yet, that you confirm'd her choice;
That proffer'd laurels, promis'd sov'reignty,
Juno and Pallas, you contemn'd for me.
Am I your empire then, and your renown?
What heart of rock, but must by this be won?
And yet bear witness, O you pow'rs above,
How rude I am in all the arts of love!
My hand is yet untaught to write to men:
This is th' essay of my unpractis'd pen·
Happy those nymphs whom use has perfect made;
I think all crime, and tremble at a shade.
Ev'n while I write, my fearful conscious eyes
Look often back, misdoubting a surprize.
For now the rumour spreads among the crowd,
At court in whispers, but in town aloud.
Dissemble you, what e'er you hear 'em say:
To leave off loving were your better way;
Yet if you will dissemble it, you may.
Love secretly: the absence of my lord
More freedom gives, but does not all afford:
Long is his journey, long will be his stay;
Call'd by affairs of consequence away.
To go or not when unresolv'd he stood,
I bid him make what swift return he cou'd:
Then kissing me, he said, 'I recommend
All to thy care, but most my Trojan friend.'
I smil'd at what he innocently said,
And only answer'd, you shall be obey'd.
Propitious winds have borne him far from hence,
But let not this secure your confidence.
Absent he is, yet absent he commands:
You know the proverb, Princes have long hands.
My fame's my burden: for the more I'm prais'd,
A juster ground of jealousy is rais'd.
Were I less fair, I might have been more blest:

Great beauty through great danger is possest,
To leave me here his venture was not hard,
Because he thought my virtue was my guard.
He fear'd my face, but trusted to my life,
The beauty doubted, but believ'd the wife.
You bid me use th' occasion while I can,
Put in our hands by the good easy man.
I wou'd, and yet I doubt, 'twixt love and fear;
One draws me from you, and one brings me near.
Our flames are mutual; and my husband's gone:
The nights are long, I fear to lie alone.
One house contains us, and weak walls divide,
And you're too pressing to be long denied:
Let me not live, but every thing conspires
To join our loves, and yet my fear retires.
You court with words, when you should force imploy:
A rape is requisite to shamefac'd joy.
Indulgent to the wrongs which we receive,
Our sex can suffer what we dare not give.
What have I said! for both of us 'twere best,
Our kindling fires if each of us supprest.
The faith of strangers is too prone to change,
And, like themselves, their wandring passions range.
Hipsypyle, and the fond Minoian maid,
Were both by trusting of their guests betray'd.
How can I doubt that other men deceive,
When you yourself did fair Oenone leave?
But lest I shou'd upbraid your treachery,
You make a merit of that crime to me.
Yet grant you were to faithful love inclin'd,
Your weary Trojans wait but for a wind.
Should you prevail; while I assign the night,
Your sails are hoisted, and you take your flight:
Some bawling mariner our love destroys,
And breaks asunder our unfinish'd joys.
But I with you may leave the Spartan port,
To view the Trojan wealth, and Priam's court:

Shown while I see, I shall expose my fame,
And fill a foreign country with my shame.
In Asia what reception shall I find?
And what dishonour leave in Greece behind?
What will your brothers, Priam, Hecuba,
And what will all your modest matrons say?
Ev'n you, when on this action you reflect,
My future conduct justly may suspect;
And what e're stranger lands upon your coast,
Conclude me, by your own example, lost.
I from your rage a strumpet's name shall hear,
While you forget what part in it you bear.
You, my crime's author, will my crime upbraid:
Deep under ground, Oh let me first be laid!
You boast the pomp and plenty of your land,
And promise all shall be at my command:
Your Trojan wealth, believe me, I despise;
My own poor native land has dearer ties.
Shou'd I be injur'd on your Phrygian shore,
What help of kindred cou'd I there implore?
Medea was by Jason's flatt'ry won:
I may, like her, believe, and be undone.
Plain honest hearts, like mine, suspect no cheat,
And love contributes to its own deceit.
The ships, about whose sides loud tempests roar,
With gentle winds were wafted from the shore.
Your teeming mother dreamt a flaming brand,
Sprung from her womb, consum'd the Trojan land.
To second this, old prophecies conspire,
That Ilium shall be burnt with Grecian fire.
Both give me fear; nor is it much allay'd,
That Venus is oblig'd our loves to aid.
For they who lost their cause, revenge will take;
And for one friend two enemies you make.
Nor can I doubt, but shou'd I follow you,
The sword wou'd soon our fatal crime pursue:
A wrong so great my husband's rage wou'd rouse,

And my relations wou'd his cause espouse.
You boast your strength and courage; but alas!
Your words receive small credit from your face.
Let heroes in the dusty field delight,
Those limbs were fashion'd for another fight.
Bid Hector sally from the walls of Troy;
A sweeter quarrel shou'd your arms employ.
Yet fears like these, shou'd not my mind perplex,
Were I as wise as many of my sex.
But time and you may bolder thoughts inspire;
And I perhaps may yield to your desire.
You last demand a private conference,
These are your words, but I can guess your sense.
Your unripe hopes their harvest must attend:
Be rul'd by me, and time may be your friend.
This is enough to let you understand;
For now my pen has tir'd my tender hand:
My woman knows the secret of my heart,
And may hereafter better news impart.

Dido to Aeneas

So, ON Maeander's banks, when death is nigh,
The mournful swan sings her own elegie.
Not that I hope (for, oh, that hope were vain!)
By words your lost affection to regain:
But having lost what ere was worth my care,
Why shou'd I fear to lose a dying pray'r?
'Tis then resolv'd poor Dido must be left,
Of life, of honour, and of love bereft!
While you, with loosen'd sails, and vows, prepare
To seek a land that flies the searchers' care.
Nor can my rising tow'rs your flight restrain,
Nor my new empire, offer'd you in vain.
Built walls you shun, unbuilt you seek; that land
Is yet to conquer; but you this command.

Suppose you landed where your wish design'd,
Think what reception foreigners would find.
What people is so void of common sense,
To vote succession from a native prince?
Yet there new scepters and new loves you seek;
New vows to plight, and plighted vows to break.
When will your tow'rs the height of Carthage know?
Or when, your eyes discern such crowds below?
If such a town and subjects you cou'd see,
Still wou'd you want a wife who lov'd like me.
For, oh, I burn, like fires with incense bright:
Not holy tapers flame with purer light:
Aeneas is my thoughts' perpetual theme;
Their daily longing, and their nightly dream.
Yet he ungrateful and obdurate still:
Fool that I am to place my heart so ill!
My self I cannot to my self restore;
Still I complain, and still I love him more.
Have pity, Cupid, on my bleeding heart,
And pierce thy brother's with an equal dart.
I rave: nor canst thou Venus' offspring be,
Love's mother could not bear a son like thee.
From harden'd oak, or from a rock's cold womb,
At least thou art from some fierce tigress come;
Or, on rough seas, from their foundation torn,
Got by the winds, and in a tempest born:
Like that, which now thy trembling sailors fear;
Like that, whose rage should still detain thee here.
Behold how high the foamy billows ride!
The winds and waves are on the juster side.
To winter weather, and a stormy sea
I'll owe, what rather I wou'd owe to thee.
Death thou deserv'st from Heav'ns avenging laws;
But I'm unwilling to become the cause.
To shun my love, if thou wilt seek thy fate,
'Tis a dear purchase, and a costly hate.
Stay but a little, 'till the tempest cease,

And the loud winds are lull'd into a peace.
May all thy rage, like theirs, unconstant prove!
And so it will, if there be pow'r in love.
Know'st thou not yet what dangers ships sustain?
So often wrack'd, how dar'st thou tempt the main?
Which were it smooth, were ev'ry wave asleep,
Ten thousand forms of death are in the deep.
In that abyss the Gods their vengeance store,
For broken vows of those who falsely swore.
There winged storms on sea-born Venus wait,
To vindicate the justice of her state.
Thus, I to thee the means of safety show;
And, lost myself, would still preserve my foe.
False as thou art, I not thy death design:
O rather live, to be the cause of mine!
Shou'd some avenging storm thy vessel tear,
(But heav'n forbid my words shou'd omen bear)
Then in thy face thy perjur'd vows would fly,
And my wrong'd ghost be present to thy eye.
With threat'ning looks think thou behold'st me stare,
Gasping my mouth, and clotted all my hair.
Then shou'd fork'd lightning and red thunder fall,
What cou'dst thou say, but, I deserv'd 'em all.
Lest this shou'd happen, make not haste away;
To shun the danger will be worth thy stay.
Have pity on thy son, if not on me:
My death alone is guilt enough for thee.
What has his youth, what have thy Gods deserv'd,
To sink in seas, who were from fires preserv'd?
But neither Gods nor parent didst thou bear;
(Smooth stories all, to please a woman's ear,)
False was the tale of thy romantic life;
Nor yet am I thy first deluded wife.
Left to pursuing foes Creusa stai'd,
By thee, base man, forsaken and betray'd.
This, when thou told'st me, struck my tender heart,
That such requital follow'd such desert.

Nor doubt I but the Gods, for crimes like these,
Sev'n winters kept thee wandring on the seas.
Thy starv'd companions, cast ashore, I fed,
Thyself admitted to my crown and bed.
To harbour strangers, succour the distrest,
Was kind enough; but oh too kind the rest!
Curst be the cave which first my ruin brought,
Where, from the storm, we common shelter sought!
A dreadful howling echo'd round the place:
The mountain nymphs, thought I, my nuptials grace.
I thought so then, but now too late I know
The Furies yell'd my funerals from below.
O Chastity and violated Fame,
Exact your dues to my dead husband's name!
By death redeem my reputation lost,
And to his arms restore my guilty ghost.
Close by my palace, in a gloomy grove,
Is rais'd a chapel to my murder'd love;
There, wreath'd with boughs and wool his statue stands
The pious monument of artful hands.
Last night, me thought, he call'd me from the dome
And thrice, with hollow voice, cry'd, Dido, come.
She comes; thy wife thy lawful summons hears;
But comes more slowly, clogg'd with conscious fears.
Forgive the wrong I offer'd to thy bed;
Strong were his charms, who my weak faith misled.
His goddess mother, and his aged sire,
Born on his back, did to my fall conspire.
Oh such he was, and is, that were he true,
Without a blush I might his love pursue.
But cruel stars my birthday did attend;
And as my fortune open'd, it must end.
My plighted lord was at the altar slain,
Whose wealth was made my bloody brother's gain.
Friendless, and follow'd by the murd'rer's hate,
To foreign countries I remov'd my fate;
And here, a suppliant, from the natives' hands

I bought the ground on which my city stands,
With all the coast that stretches to the sea,
Ev'n to the friendly port that sheltred thee:
Then rais'd these walls, which mount into the air,
At once my neighbours' wonder, and their fear.
For now they arm; and round me leagues are made,
My scarce establisht empire to invade.
To man my new built walls I must prepare,
An helpless woman, and unskill'd in war.
Yet thousand rivals to my love pretend;
And for my person, would my crown defend:
Whose jarring votes in one complaint agree,
That each unjustly is disdain'd for thee.
To proud Hyarbas give me up a prey;
(For that must follow, if thou go'st away:)
Or to my husband's murd'rer leave my life,
That to the husband he may add the wife.
Go then, since no complaints can move thy mind:
Go, perjur'd man, but leave thy Gods behind.
Touch not those Gods, by whom thou art forsworn,
Who will in impious hands no more be born.
Thy sacrilegious worship they disdain,
And rather wou'd the Grecian fires sustain.
Perhaps my greatest shame is still to come;
And part of thee lies hid within my womb.
The babe unborn must perish by thy hate,
And perish guiltless in his mother's fate.
Some God, thou say'st, thy voyage does command;
Wou'd the same God had barr'd thee from my land!
The same, I doubt not, thy departure steers,
Who kept thee out at sea so many years;
While thy long labours were a price so great,
As thou to purchase Troy wouldst not repeat.
But Tiber now thou seek'st; to be at best,
When there arriv'd, a poor precarious guest.
Yet it deludes thy search: perhaps it will
To thy old age lie undiscover'd still.

A ready crown and wealth in dower I bring,
And, without conqu'ring, here thou art a king.
Here thou to Carthage may'st transfer thy Troy:
Here young Ascanius may his arms employ,
And, while we live secure in soft repose,
Bring many laurels home from conquer'd foes.
By Cupid's arrows, I adjure thee stay;
By all the Gods, companions of thy way.
So may thy Trojans, who are yet alive
Live still, and with no future fortune strive;
So may thy youthful son old age attain,
And thy dead father's bones in peace remain;
As thou hast pity on unhappy me,
Who knew no crime, but too much love of thee.
I am not born from fierce Achilles' line,
Nor did my parents against Troy combine.
To be thy wife if I unworthy prove,
By some inferiour name admit my love.
To be secur'd of still possessing thee,
What wou'd I do, and what wou'd I not be!
Our Libyan coasts their certain seasons know,
When free from tempests passengers may go:
But now with northern blasts the billows roar,
And drive the floating sea-weed to the shore.
Leave to my care the time to sail away;
When safe, I will not suffer thee to stay.
Thy weary men wou'd be with ease content;
Their sails are tatter'd, and their masts are spent.
If by no merit I thy mind can move,
What thou deny'st my merit, give my love.
Stay, till I learn my loss to undergo;
And give me time to struggle with my woe.
If not; know this, I will not suffer long;
My life's too loathsome, and my love too strong.
Death holds my pen, and dictates what I say,
While 'cross my lap thy Trojan sword I lay.
My tears flow down; the sharp edge cuts their flood,

And drinks my sorrows, that must drink my blood.
How well thy gift does with my fate agree!
My funeral pomp is cheaply made by thee.
To no new wounds my bosom I display:
The sword but enters where love made the way.
But thou, dear sister, and yet dearer friend,
Shalt my cold ashes to their urn attend.
Sichaeus' wife let not the marble boast,
I lost that title, when my fame I lost.
This short inscription only let it bear:
Unhappy Dido lies in quiet here.
The cause of death, and sword by which she dy'd,
Aeneas gave: the rest her arm supply'd.

The Art of Love

In Cupid's school whoe'er wou'd take degree,
Must learn his rudiments, by reading me.
Seamen with sailing arts their vessels move;
Art guides the chariot; art instructs to love.
Of ships and chariots others know the rule;
But I am master in love's mighty school.
Cupid indeed is obstinate and wild,
A stubborn God; but yet the God's a child:
Easy to govern in his tender age,
Like fierce Achilles in his pupillage.
That hero, born for conquest, trembling stood
Before the centaur, and receiv'd the rod.
As Chiron mollify'd his cruel mind
With art; and taught his warlike hands to wind
The silver strings of his melodious lyre:
So love's fair Goddess does my soul inspire,
To teach her softer arts; to soothe the mind,
And smooth the rugged breasts of human kind.
Yet Cupid and Achilles, each with scorn
And rage were fill'd; and both were Goddess-born.

The bull, reclaim'd and yok'd, the burden draws:
The horse receives the bit within his jaws,
And stubborn Love shall bend beneath my sway,
Tho' struggling oft he strives to disobey.
He shakes his torch, he wounds me with his darts;
But vain his force, and vainer are his arts.
The more he burns my soul, or wounds my sight,
The more he teaches to revenge the spite.
I boast no aid the Delphian God affords,
Nor auspice from the flight of chattering birds;
Nor Clio, nor her sisters have I seen;
As Hesiod saw them on the shady green.
Experience makes my work a truth so try'd,
You may believe; and Venus be my guide.
Far hence, ye Vestals, be, who bind your hair;
And wives, who gowns below your ankles wear.
I sing the brothels loose and unconfin'd,
Th' unpunishable pleasures of the kind;
Which all alike, for love, or money find.
You, who in Cupid's rolls inscribe your name,
First seek an object worthy of your flame,
Then strive, with art, your lady's mind to gain:
And, last, provide your love may long remain.
On these three precepts all my work shall move:
These are the rules and principles of love.
Before your youth with marriage is opprest,
Make choice of one who suits your humour best;
And such a damsel drops not from the sky;
She must be sought for with a curious eye.
The wary angler, in the winding brook,
Knows what the fish, and where to bait his hook
The fowler and the huntsman know by name
The certain haunts and harbour of their game.
So must the lover beat the likeliest grounds;
Th' assemblies where his quarry most abounds.
Nor shall my novice wander far astray;
These rules shall put him in the ready way.

Thou shalt not sail around the continent,
As far as Perseus, or as Paris went:
For Rome alone affords thee such a store,
As all the world can hardly shew thee more.
The face of heav'n with fewer stars is crown'd,
Than beauties in the Roman sphere are found.
Whether thy love is bent on blooming youth,
On dawning sweetness, in unartful truth;
Or courts the juicy joys of riper growth;
Here mayst thou find thy full desires in both.
Or if autumnal beauties please thy sight
(An age that knows to give, and take delight;)
Millions of matrons of the graver sort,
In common prudence, will not balk the sport.
In summer heats thou needst but only go
To Pompey's cool and shady portico;
Or Concord's fane; or that proud edifice,
Whose turrets near the bawdy suburb rise:
Or to that other portico, where stands
The cruel father, urging his commands,
And fifty daughters wait the time of rest,
To plunge their poniards in the bridegroom's breast:
Or Venus' temple; where, on annual nights,
They mourn Adonis with Assyrian rites.
Nor shun the Jewish walk, where the foul drove,
On Sabbaths, rest from everything but love.
Nor Isis' temple; for that sacred whore
Makes others, what to Jove she was before.
And if the hall itself be not bely'd,
Ev'n there the cause of love is often try'd;
Near it at least, or in the palace yard,
From whence the noisy combatants are heard.
The crafty counsellors, in formal gown,
There gain another's cause, but lose their own.
There eloquence is nonplust in the suit;
And lawyers, who had words at will, are mute.
Venus, from her adjoining temple, smiles,

To see them caught in their litigious wiles.
Grave senators lead home the youthful dame,
Returning clients, when they patrons came.
But above all, the play-house is the place;
There's choice of quarry in that narrow chase.
There take thy stand, and sharply looking out,
Soon mayst thou find a mistress in the rout,
For length of time, or for a single bout.
The theatres are berries for the fair:
Like ants on mole-hills, thither they repair;
Like bees to hives, so numerously they throng,
It may be said, they to that place belong.
Thither they swarm, who have the public voice:
There choose, if plenty not distracts thy choice.
To see and to be seen, in heaps they run;
Some to undo, and some to be undone.
From Romulus the rise of plays began,
To his new subjects a commodious man;
Who, his unmarried soldiers to supply,
Took care the commonwealth should multiply:
Providing Sabine women for his braves,
Like a true king, to get a race of slaves.
His play-house not of Parian marble made,
Nor was it spread with purple sails for shade.
The stage with rushes, or with leaves they strew'd:
No scenes in prospect, no machining God.
On rows of homely turf they sate to see,
Crown'd with the wreaths of every common tree.
There, while they sat in rustic majesty,
Each lover had his mistress in his eye;
And whom he saw most suiting to his mind,
For joys of matrimonial rape design'd.
Scarce cou'd they wait the plaudit in their haste;
But, e're the dances and the song were past,
The monarch gave the signal from his throne;
And rising, bad his merry men fall on.
The martial crew, like soldiers ready prest,

Just at the word (the word too was the best)
With joyful cries each other animate;
Some choose, and some at hazard seize their mate.
As doves from eagles, or from wolves the lambs,
So from their lawless lovers fly the dames.
Their fear was one, but not one face of fear;
Some rend the lovely tresses of their hair;
Some shriek, and some are struck with dumb despair.
Her absent mother one invokes in vain;
One stands amaz'd, not daring to complain;
The nimbler trust their feet, the slow remain.
But nought availing, all are captives led,
Trembling and blushing to the genial bed.
She who too long resisted, or deny'd,
The lusty lover made by force a bride;
And, with superiour strength, compell'd her to his side.
Then sooth'd her thus!—"My soul's far better part,
Cease weeping, nor afflict thy tender heart:
For what thy father to thy mother was,
That faith to thee, that solemn vow I pass!"
 Thus Romulus became so popular;
This was the way to thrive in peace and war;
To pay his army, and fresh whores to bring:
Who wou'd not fight for such a gracious king!
 Thus love in theaters did first improve;
And theaters are still the scene of love:
Nor shun the chariots, and the courser's race;
The circus is no inconvenient place.
No need is there of talking on the hand;
Nor nods, nor signs, which lovers understand.
But boldly next the fair your seat provide;
Close as you can to hers; and side by side.
Pleas'd or unpleas'd, no matter; crowding sit:
For so the laws of public shows permit.
Then find occasion to begin discourse;
Enquire, whose chariot this, and whose that horse?
To whatsoever side she is inclin'd,

Suit all your inclinations to her mind;
Like what she likes; from thence your court begin;
And whom she favours, wish that he may win.
But when the statues of the deities,
In chariots roll'd, appear before the prize;
When Venus comes, with deep devotion rise.
If dust be on her lap, or grains of sand,
Brush both away with your officious hand.
If none be there, yet brush that nothing thence;
And still to touch her lap make some pretence.
Touch any thing of hers; and if her train
Sweep on the ground, let it not sweep in vain;
But gently take it up, and wipe it clean;
And while you wipe it, with observing eyes,
Who knows but you may see her naked thighs!
Observe, who sits behind her; and beware,
Lest his incroaching knee shou'd press the fair.
Light service takes light minds: for some can tell
Of favours won, by laying cushions well:
By fanning faces some their fortune meet;
And some by laying footstools for their feet.
These overtures of love the Circus gives;
Nor at the sword-play less the lover thrives:
For there the son of Venus fights his prize;
And deepest wounds are oft receiv'd from eyes.
One, while the crowd their acclamations make,
Or while he bets, and puts his ring to stake,
Is struck from far, and feels the flying dart;
And of the spectacle is made a part.
 Caesar wou'd represent a naval fight,
For his own honour, and for Rome's delight.
From either sea the youths and maidens come;
And all the world was then contain'd in Rome!
In this vast concourse, in this choice of game,
What Roman heart but felt a foreign flame?
Once more our prince prepares to make us glad;
And the remaining east to Rome will add.

Rejoice, ye Roman soldiers, in your urn;
Your ensigns from the Parthians shall return;
And the slain Crassi shall no longer mourn.
A youth is sent those trophies to demand;
And bears his father's thunder in his hand:
Doubt not th' imperial boy in wars unseen;
In childhood all of Caesar's race are men.
Celestial seeds shoot out before their day,
Prevent their years, and brook no dull delay.
Thus infant Hercules the snakes did press,
And in his cradle did his sire confess.
Bacchus a boy, yet like a hero fought,
And early spoils from conquer'd India brought.
Thus you your father's troops shall lead to fight,
And thus shall vanquish in your father's right.
These rudiments you to your lineage owe;
Born to increase your titles as you grow.
Brethren you had, revenge your brethren slain;
You have a father, and his rights maintain.
Arm'd by your country's parent, and your own,
Redeem your country, and restore his throne.
Your enemies assert an impious cause;
You fight both for divine and human laws.
Already in their cause they are o'ercome:
Subject them too, by force of arms, to Rome.
Great father Mars with greater Caesar join,
To give a prosperous omen to your line:
One of you is, and one shall be divine.
I prophesy you shall, you shall o'ercome:
My verse shall bring you back in triumph home.
Speak in my verse, exhort to loud alarms:
O were my numbers equal to your arms.
Then will I sing the Parthians' overthrow;
Their shot averse sent from a flying bow:
The Parthians, who already flying fight,
Already give an omen of their flight.
O when will come the day, by heav'n design'd,

When thou, the best and fairest of mankind,
Drawn by white horses shalt in triumph ride,
With conquer'd slaves attending on thy side;
Slaves, that no longer can be safe in flight;
O glorious object, O surprizing sight,
O day of public joy, too good to end in night!
On such a day, if thou, and, next to thee,
Some beauty sits the spectacle to see:
If she enquire the names of conquer'd kings,
Of mountains, rivers, and their hidden springs,
Answer to all thou know'st; and, if need be,
Of things unknown seem to speak knowingly,
This is Euphrates, crown'd with reeds, and there
Flows the swift Tigris with his sea-green hair.
Invent new names of things unknown before;
Call this Armenia, that the Caspian shore;
Call this a Mede, and that a Parthian youth;
Talk probably; no matter for the truth.
In feasts, as at our shows, new means abound;
More pleasure there, than that of wine is found.
The Paphian goddess there her ambush lays;
And Love betwixt the horns of Bacchus plays:
Desires increase at ev'ry swilling draught;
Brisk vapours add new vigour to the thought.
There Cupid's purple wings no flight afford;
But wet with wine, he flutters on the board.
He shakes his pinions, but he cannot move;
Fix'd he remains, and turns a maudlin love.
Wine warms the blood, and makes the spirits flow;
Care flies, and wrinkles from the forehead go:
Exalts the poor, invigorates the weak;
Gives mirth and laughter, and a rosy cheek.
Bold truths it speaks; and, spoken, dares maintain;
And brings our old simplicity again.
Love sparkles in the cup, and fills it higher:
Wine feeds the flames, and fuel adds to fire.
But choose no mistress in thy drunken fit;

Wine gilds too much their beauties and their wit.
Nor trust thy judgment when the tapers dance;
But sober, and by day, thy suit advance.
By daylight Paris judg'd the beauteous three;
And for the fairest did the prize decree.
Night is a cheat, and all deformities
Are hid, or lessen'd in her dark disguise.
The Sun's fair light each error will confess,
In face, in shape, in jewels, and in dress.
Why name I ev'ry place where youths abound?
'Tis loss of time, and a too fruitful ground.
The Baian baths, where ships at anchor ride,
And wholesome streams from sulphur fountains glide;
Where wounded youths are by experience taught,
The waters are less healthful than they thought:
Or Dian's fane, which near the suburb lies,
Where priests, for their promotion, fight a prize.
That maiden Goddess is love's mortal foe
And much from her his subjects undergo.
Thus far the sportful muse, with myrtle bound,
Has sung where lovely lasses may be found.
Now let me sing, how she who wounds your mind,
With art, may be to cure your wounds inclin'd.
Young nobles, to my laws attention lend;
And all you vulgar of my school, attend.
First then believe, all women may be won;
Attempt with confidence, the work is done.
The grasshopper shall first forbear to sing
In summer season, or the birds in spring,
Than women can resist your flattering skill:
Ev'n she will yield, who swears she never will.
To secret pleasure both the sexes move;
But women most, who most dissemble love.
'Twere best for us, if they wou'd first declare,
Avow their passion, and submit to prayer.
The cow by lowing tells the bull her flame:
The neighing mare invites her stallion to the game.

Man is more temp'rate in his lust than they,
And more than women, can his passion sway.
Biblis, we know, did first her love declare,
And had recourse to death in her despair.
Her brother she, her father Myrrha sought,
And lov'd; but lov'd not as a daughter ought.
Now from a tree she stills her odorous tears,
Which yet the name of her who shed 'em bears.
In Ida's shady vale a bull appear'd,
White as the snow, the fairest of the herd;
A beauty spot of black there only rose,
Betwixt his equal horns and ample brows:
The love and wish of all the Cretan cows.
The queen beheld him as his head he rear'd;
And envy'd ev'ry leap he gave the herd.
A secret fire she nourish'd in her breast,
And hated ev'ry heifer he caress'd.
A story known, and known for true, I tell;
Nor Crete, though lying, can the truth conceal.
She cut him grass; (so much can love command)
She strok'd, she fed him with her royal hand:
Was pleas'd in pastures with the herd to roam,
And Minos by the bull was overcome.
Cease queen, with gems t' adorn thy beauteous brows;
The monarch of thy heart no jewel knows.
Nor in thy glass compose thy looks and eyes:
Secure from all thy charms thy lover lies:
Yet trust thy mirrour, when it tells thee true;
Thou art no heifer to allure his view.
Soon wouldst thou quit thy royal diadem
To thy fair rivals, to be horn'd like them.
If Minos please, no lover seek to find;
If not, at least seek one of human kind.
The wretched queen the Cretan court forsakes;
In woods and wilds her habitation makes:
She curses ev'ry beauteous cow she sees;
Ah, why dost thou my lord and master please!

And think'st, ungrateful creature as thou art,
With frisking awkwardly, to gain his heart.
She said; and straight commands, with frowning look,
To put her, undeserving, to the yoke;
Or feigns some holy rites of sacrifice,
And sees her rival's death with joyful eyes:
Then, when the bloody priest has done his part,
Pleas'd, in her hand she holds the beating heart;
Nor from a scornful taunt can scarce refrain;
Go, fool, and strive to please my love again.
Now she would be Europa—Io, now;
(One bore a bull; and one was made a cow.)
Yet she at last her brutal bliss obtain'd,
And in a wooden cow the bull sustain'd;
Fill'd with his seed, accomplish'd her desire;
Till, by his form, the son betray'd the sire.
If Atreus' wife to incest had not run,
(But ah, how hard it is to love but one!)
His coursers Phoebus had not driv'n away,
To shun that sight, and interrupt the day.
Thy daughter, Nisus, pull'd thy purple hair,
And barking sea-dogs yet her bowels tear.
At sea and land Atrides sav'd his life,
Yet fell a prey to his adult'rous wife.
Who knows not what revenge Medea sought,
When the slain offspring bore the father's fault?
Thus Phoenix did a woman's love bewail:
And thus Hippolytus by Phaedra fell.
These crimes revengeful matrons did commit:
Hotter their lust, and sharper is their wit.
Doubt not from them an easy victory:
Scarce of a thousand dames will one deny.
All women are content that men shou'd woo;
She who complains, and she who will not do.
Rest then secure, whate'er thy luck may prove,
Not to be hated for declaring love:
And yet how canst thou miss, since womankind

Is frail and vain, and still to change inclin'd?
Old husbands and stale gallants they despise;
And more another's than their own, they prize.
A larger crop adorns our neighbour's field;
More milk his kine from swelling udders yield.
First gain the maid; by her thou shalt be sure
A free access, and easy to procure:
Who knows what to her office does belong,
Is in the secret, and can hold her tongue.
Bribe her with gifts, with promises, and pray'rs;
For her good word goes far in love affairs.
The time and fit occasion leave to her,
When she most aptly can thy suit prefer.
The time for maids to fire their lady's blood,
Is, when they find her in a merry mood.
When all things at her wish and pleasure move:
Her heart is open then, and free to love.
Then mirth and wantonness to lust betray,
And smooth the passage to the lover's way.
Troy stood the siege, when fill'd with anxious care:
One merry fit concluded all the war.
If some fair rival vex her jealous mind,
Offer thy service to revenge in kind,
Instruct the damsel, while she combs her hair,
To raise the choler of that injur'd fair:
And sighing, make her mistress understand,
She has the means of vengeance in her hand.
Then, naming thee, thy humble suit prefer;
And swear thou languishest and dy'st for her.
Then let her lose no time, but push at all;
For women soon are rais'd, and soon they fall.
Give their first fury leisure to relent,
They melt like ice, and suddenly repent.
T' enjoy the maid, will that thy suit advance?
'Tis a hard question, and a doubtful chance.
One maid, corrupted, bawds the better for't;
Another for herself wou'd keep the sport.

Thy bus'ness may be further'd or delay'd:
But by my counsel, let alone the maid:
Ev'n tho' she shou'd consent to do the feat,
The profit's little, and the danger great.
I will not lead thee through a rugged road;
But where the way lies open, safe, and broad.
Yet if thou find'st her very much thy friend,
And her good face her diligence commend:
Let the fair mistress have thy first embrace,
And let the maid come after in her place.

But this I will advise, and mark my words,
For 'tis the best advice my skill affords:
If needs thou with the damsel wilt begin;
Before th' attempt is made, make sure to win:
For then the secret better will be kept;
And she can tell no tales when once she's dipt.
'Tis for the fowler's interest to beware,
The bird intangled shou'd not scape the snare.
The fish, once prick'd, avoids the bearded hook,
And spoils the sport of all the neighb'ring brook.
But if the wench be thine, she makes thy way;
And, for thy sake, her mistress will betray;
Tell all she knows, and all she hears her say.
Keep well the counsel of thy faithful spy:
So shalt thou learn whene'er she treads awry.

All things the stations of their seasons keep;
And certain times there are to sow and reap.
Ploughmen and sailors for the season stay,
One to plough land, and one to plough the sea:
So shou'd the lover wait the lucky day.
Then stop thy suit; it hurts not thy design:
But think another hour she may be thine.
And when she celebrates her birth at home,
Or when she views the public shows of Rome,
Know, all thy visits then are troublesome.
Defer thy work, and put not then to sea,
For that's a boding and a stormy day.

Else take thy time, and, when thou canst, begin:
To break a Jewish sabbath, think no sin:
Nor ev'n on superstitious days abstain;
Not when the Romans were at Allia slain.
Ill omens in her frowns are understood;
When she's in humour, ev'ry day is good.
But than her birthday seldom comes a worse;
When bribes and presents must be sent of course;
And that's a bloody day, that costs thy purse.
Be stanch; yet parsimony will be vain:
The craving sex will still the lover drain.
No skill can shift 'em off, nor art remove;
They will be begging, when they know we love.
The merchant comes upon th' appointed day,
Who shall before thy face his wares display.
To choose for her she craves thy kind advice;
Then begs again, to bargain for the price:
But when she has her purchase in her eye,
She hugs thee close, and kisses thee to buy.
" 'Tis what I want, and 'tis a pennorth too;
In many years I will not trouble you."
If you complain you have no ready coin;
No matter, 'tis but writing of a line,
A little bill, not to be paid at sight;
(Now curse the time when thou wert taught to write)
She keeps her birthday; you must send the cheer;
And she'll be born a hundred times a year.
With daily lies she dribs thee into cost;
That ear-ring dropt a stone, that ring is lost.
They often borrow what they never pay;
Whate'er you lend her, think it thrown away.
Had I ten mouths and tongues to tell each art,
All wou'd be weary'd e'er I told a part.
By letters, not by words, thy love begin;
And ford the dangerous passage with thy pen.
If to her heart thou aim'st to find the way,
Extremely flatter, and extremely pray.

Priam by pray'rs did Hector's body gain;
Nor is an angry god invok'd in vain.
With promis'd gifts her easy mind bewitch;
For ev'n the poor in promise may be rich.
Vain hopes a while her appetite will stay;
'Tis a deceitful, but commodious way.
Who gives is mad, but make her still believe
'Twill come, and that's the cheapest way to give.
Ev'n barren lands fair promises afford;
But the lean harvest cheats the starving lord.
Buy not thy first enjoyment; lest it prove
Of bad example to thy future love:
But get it gratis; and she'll give thee more,
For fear of losing what she gave before.
The losing gamester shakes the box in vain,
And bleeds, and loses on, in hopes to gain.
 Write then, and in thy letter, as I said,
Let her with mighty promises be fed.
Cydippe by a letter was betray'd,
Writ on an apple to th' unwary maid.
She read herself into a marriage vow;
(And ev'ry cheat in love the gods allow.)
Learn eloquence, ye noble youth of Rome;
It will not only at the bar o'ercome:
Sweet words the people and the senate move;
But the chief end of eloquence is love.
But in thy letter hide thy moving arts;
Affect not to be thought a man of parts.
None but vain fools to simple women preach;
A learned letter oft has made a breach.
In a familiar style your thoughts convey,
And write such things, as present you wou'd say;
Such words as from the heart may seem to move:
'Tis wit enough to make her think you love.
If seal'd she sends it back, and will not read:
Yet hope, in time, the business may succeed.
In time the steer will to the yoke submit;

In time the restive horse will bear the bit.
Ev'n the hard plough-share use will wear away;
And stubborn steel in length of time decay.
Water is soft, and marble hard; and yet
We see soft water through hard marble eat.
Though late, yet Troy at length in flames expir'd;
And ten years more Penelope had tir'd.
Perhaps, thy lines unanswer'd she retain'd;
No matter; there's a point already gain'd:
For she who reads, in time will answer too;
Things must be left by just degrees to grow.
Perhaps she writes, but answers with disdain,
And sharply bids you not to write again:
What she requires, she fears you shou'd accord;
The jilt wou'd not be taken at her word.
Meantime, if she be carried in her chair,
Approach; but do not seem to know she's there.
Speak softly, to delude the standers by;
Or, if aloud, then speak ambiguously.
If sauntring in the portico she walk,
Move slowly too; for that's a time for talk:
And sometimes follow, sometimes be her guide:
But when the crowd permits, go side by side
Nor in the play-house let her sit alone:
For she's the play-house and the play in one.
There thou may'st ogle, or by signs advance
Thy suit, and seem to touch her hand by chance.
Admire the dancer who her liking gains,
And pity in the play the lover's pains;
For her sweet sake the loss of time despise;
Sit while she sits, and when she rises rise.
But dress not like a fop; nor curl your hair,
Nor with a pumice make your body bare.
Leave those effeminate and useless toys
To eunuchs, who can give no solid joys.
Neglect becomes a man: this Theseus found:
Uncurl'd, uncomb'd, the nymph his wishes crown'd.

The rough Hippolytus was Phaedra's care;
And Venus thought the rude Adonis fair.
Be not too finical; but yet be clean;
And wear well-fashion'd clothes, like other men.
Let not your teeth be yellow, or be foul;
Nor in wide shoes your feet too loosely roul.
Of a black muzzle, and long beard beware,
And let a skilful barber cut your hair:
Your nails be pick'd from filth, and even par'd;
Nor let your nasty nostrils bud with beard.
Cure your unsav'ry breath, gargle your throat,
And free your arm-pits from the ram and goat.
Dress not, in short, too little, or too much;
And be not wholly French, nor wholly Dutch.
Now Bacchus calls me to his jolly rites:
Who wou'd not follow, when a god invites?
He helps the poet, and his pen inspires,
Kind and indulgent to his former fires.
Fair Ariadne wander'd on the shore,
Forsaken now; and Theseus loves no more:
Loose was her gown, dishevel'd was her hair;
Her bosom naked, and her feet were bare:
Exclaiming, in the waters' brink she stood;
Her briny tears augment the briny flood.
She shriek'd, and wept, and both became her face:
No posture cou'd that heav'nly form disgrace.
She beat her breast: the traitor's gone, said she,
What shall become of poor forsaken me?
What shall become——she had not time for more,
The sounding cymbals rattled on the shore.
She swoons for fear, she falls upon the ground;
No vital heat was in her body found.
The Mimallonian dames about her stood;
And scudding Satyrs ran before their God.
Silenus on his ass did next appear,
And held upon the mane (the God was clear)
The drunken sire pursues; the dames retire;

Sometimes the drunken dames pursue the drunken sire.
At last he topples over on the plain;
The Satyrs laugh, and bid him rise again.
And now the God of Wine came driving on,
High on his chariot by swift tigers drawn,
Her colour, voice, and sense forsook the fair,
Thrice did her trembling feet for flight prepare,
And thrice affrighted did her flight forbear.
She shook, like leaves of corn when tempests blow
Or slender reeds that in the marshes grow.
To whom the God—"Compose thy fearful mind;
In me a truer husband thou shalt find.
With heav'n I will endow thee; and thy star
Shall with propitious light be seen afar,
And guide on seas the doubtful mariner."
He said; and from his chariot leaping light;
Lest the grim tigers shou'd the nymph affright,
His brawny arms around her waist he threw;
(For Gods, whate'er they will, with ease can do:)
And swiftly bore her thence: th' attending throng
Shout at the sight, and sing the nuptial song.
Now in full bowls her sorrow she may steep:
The bridegroom's liquor lays the bride asleep.
But thou, when flowing cups in triumph ride,
And the lov'd nymph is seated by thy side;
Invoke the God, and all the mighty pow'rs,
That wine may not defraud thy genial hours.
Then in ambiguous words thy suit prefer;
Which she may know were all addrest to her,
In liquid purple letters write her name,
Which she may read, and reading find thy flame.
Then may your eyes confess your mutual fires;
(For eyes have tongues, and glances tell desires)
Whene'er she drinks, be first to take the cup;
And where she laid her lips, the blessing sup.
When she to carving does her hand advance,
Put out thy own, and touch it as by chance.

Thy service ev'n her husband must attend:
(A husband is a most convenient friend.)
Seat the fool cuckold in the highest place:
And with thy garland his dull temples grace.
Whether below, or equal in degree,
Let him be lord of all the company;
And what he says, be seconded by thee.
'Tis common to deceive through friendship's name:
But common though it be, 'tis still to blame:
Thus factors frequently their trust betray,
And to themselves their masters' gains convey.
Drink to a certain pitch, and then give o'er;
Thy tongue and feet may stumble, drinking more.
Of drunken quarrels in her sight beware;
Pot valour only serves to fright the fair.
Eurytion justly fell, by wine opprest,
For his rude riot at a wedding-feast.
Sing, if you have a voice; and show your parts
In dancing, if endu'd with dancing arts.
Do any thing within your power to please;
Nay, ev'n affect a seeming drunkenness;
Clip every word; and if by chance you speak
Too home; or if too broad a jest you break;
In your excuse the company will join,
And lay the fault upon the force of wine.
True drunkenness is subject to offend;
But when 'tis feign'd, 'tis oft a lover's friend.
Then safely you may praise her beauteous face,
And call him happy, who is in her grace.
Her husband thinks himself the man design'd;
But curse the cuckold in your secret mind.
When all are risen, and prepare to go,
Mix with the crowd, and tread upon her toe.
This is the proper time to make thy court;
For now she's in the vein, and fit for sport;
Lay bashfulness, that rustic virtue, by;
To manly confidence thy thoughts apply

On fortune's foretop timely fix thy hold;
Now speak and speed, for Venus loves the bold.
No rules of rhetoric here I need afford:
Only begin, and trust the following word;
It will be witty of its own accord.
Act well the lover, let thy speech abound
In dying words, that represent thy wound.
Distrust not her belief; she will be mov'd;
All women think they merit to be lov'd.
Sometimes a man begins to love in jest,
And, after, feels the torments he profest.
For your own sakes be pitiful, ye fair;
For a feign'd passion may a true prepare.
By flatteries we prevail on woman-kind;
As hollow banks by streams are undermin'd.
Tell her, her face is fair, her eyes are sweet
Her taper fingers praise, and little feet.
Such praises ev'n the chaste are pleas'd to hear;
Both maids and matrons hold their beauty dear.
Once naked Pallas with Jove's queen appear'd;
And still they grieve that Venus was prefer'd.
Praise the proud peacock, and he spreads his train;
Be silent, and he pulls it in again.
Pleas'd is the courser in his rapid race;
Applaud his running, and he mends his pace.
But largely promise, and devoutly swear;
And, if need be, call ev'ry God to hear.
Jove sits above, forgiving with a smile
The perjuries that easy maids beguile.
He swore to Juno by the Stygian lake:
Forsworn, he dares not an example make,
Or punish falshood, for his own dear sake.
'Tis for our int'rest that the Gods shou'd be;
Let us believe 'em: I believe, they see,
And both reward, and punish equally.
Not that they live above like lazy drones,
Or kings below, supine upon their thrones.

Lead then your lives as present in their sight;
Be just in dealings, and defend the right;
By fraud betray not, nor oppress by might.
But 'tis a venial sin to cheat the fair;
All men have liberty of conscience there.
On cheating nymphs a cheat is well design'd;
'Tis a profane and a deceitful kind.
'Tis said, that Egypt for nine years was dry,
Nor Nile did floods, nor heav'n did rain supply.
A foreigner at length inform'd the king,
That slaughter'd guests would kindly moisture bring.
The king reply'd, on thee the lot shall fall,
Be thou, my guest, the sacrifice for all.
Thus Phalaris, Perillus taught to low,
And made him season first the brazen cow.
A rightful doom, the Laws of Nature cry,
'Tis, the artificers of death should die.
Thus justly women suffer by deceit;
Their practice authorizes us to cheat.
Beg her, with tears, thy warm desires to grant;
For tears will pierce a heart of adamant.
If tears will not be squeez'd, then rub your eye,
Or 'noint the lids, and seem at least to cry.
Kiss, if you can: resistance if she make,
And will not give you kisses, let her take.
Fie, fie, you naughty man, are words of course;
She struggles but to be subdu'd by force.
Kiss only soft, I charge you, and beware,
With your hard bristles not to brush the fair.
He who has gain'd a kiss, and gains no more,
Deserves to lose the bliss he got before.
If once she kiss, her meaning is exprest;
There wants but little pushing for the rest.
Which if thou dost not gain, by strength or art,
The name of clown then suits with thy desert;
'Tis downright dulness, and a shameful part.
Perhaps, she calls it force; but, if she 'scape,

She will not thank you for th' omitted rape.
The sex is cunning to conceal their fires;
They would be forc'd, ev'n to their own desires.
They seem t' accuse you, with a down-cast sight,
But in their souls confess you did them right.
Who might be forc'd, and yet untouch'd depart,
Thank with their tongues, but curse you with their heart.
Fair Phoebe and her sister did prefer,
To their dull mates, the noble ravisher.
What Deidamia did, in days of yore,
The tale is old, but worth the reading o'er.
When Venus had the golden apple gain'd,
And the just judge fair Helen had obtain'd:
When she with triumph was at Troy receiv'd,
The Trojans joyful while the Grecians griev'd:
They vow'd revenge of violated laws,
And Greece was arming in the cuckold's cause:
Achilles, by his mother warn'd from war,
Disguis'd his sex, and lurk'd among the fair,
What means Eacides to spin and sow?
With spear, and sword, in field thy valour show;
And, leaving this, the nobler Pallas know.
Why dost thou in that hand the distaff wield,
Which is more worthy to sustain a shield?
Or with that other draw the woolly twine,
The same the Fates for Hector's thread assign?
Brandish thy falchion in thy pow'rful hand,
Which can alone the pond'rous lance command.
In the same room by chance the royal maid
Was lodg'd, and, by his seeming sex betray'd,
Close to her side the youthful hero laid.
I know not how his courtship he began;
But, to her cost, she found it was a man.
'Tis thought she struggled; but withal 'tis thought,
Her wish was to be conquer'd, when she fought.
For when disclos'd, and hast'ning to the field,
He laid his distaff down, and took the shield,

With tears her humble suit she did prefer,
And thought to stay the grateful ravisher.
She sighs, she sobs, she begs him not to part:
And now 'tis nature, what before was art.
She strives by force her lover to detain,
And wishes to be ravish'd once again.
This is the sex; they will not first begin,
But, when compell'd, are pleas'd to suffer sin.
Is there, who thinks that women first should woo;
Lay by thy self-conceit, thou foolish beaux.
Begin, and save their modesty the shame;
'Tis well for thee, if they receive thy flame.
'Tis decent for a man to speak his mind;
They but expect th' occasion to be kind.
Ask, that thou may'st enjoy; she waits for this;
And on thy first advance depends thy bliss.
Ev'n Jove himself was forc'd to sue for love;
None of the nymphs did first solicit Jove.
But if you find your pray'rs increase her pride,
Strike sail awhile, and wait another tide.
They fly when we pursue; but make delay,
And when they see you slacken, they will stay.
Sometimes it profits to conceal your end;
Name not yourself her lover, but her friend.
How many skittish girls have thus been caught?
He prov'd a lover, who a friend was thought.
Sailors by sun and wind are swarthy made;
A tann'd complexion best becomes their trade.
'Tis a disgrace to ploughmen to be fair;
Bluff cheeks they have, and weather-beaten hair.
Th' ambitious youth, who seeks an olive crown,
Is sun-burnt with his daily toil, and brown.
But if the lover hopes to be in grace,
Wan be his looks, and meager be his face.
That colour, from the fair, compassion draws:
She thinks you sick, and thinks herself the cause.
Orion wander'd in the woods for love,

His paleness did the nymphs to pity move;
His ghastly visage argu'd hidden love.
Nor fail a night-cap, in full health, to wear;
Neglect thy dress, and discompose thy hair.
All things are decent, that in love avail.
Read long by night, and study to be pale:
Forsake your food, refuse your needful rest;
Be miserable, that you may be blest.
 Shall I complain, or shall I warn you most?
Faith, truth, and friendship in the world are lost;
A little and an empty name they boast.
Trust not thy friend, much less thy mistress praise:
If he believe, thou may'st a rival raise.
'Tis true, Patroclus, by no lust misled,
Sought not to stain his dear companion's bed.
Nor Pylades Hermione embrac'd;
Ev'n Phaedra to Perithous still was chaste.
But hope not thou, in this vile age, to find
Those rare examples of a faithful mind.
The sea shall sooner with sweet honey flow;
Or from the furzes pears and apples grow.
We sin with gust, we love by fraud to gain:
And find a pleasure in our fellow's pain.
From rival foes you may the fair defend;
But would you ward the blow, beware your friend.
Beware your brother, and your next of kin;
But from your bosom friend your care begin.
 Here I had ended, but experience finds,
That sundry women are of sundry minds;
With various crochets fill'd, and hard to please;
They therefore must be caught by various ways.
All things are not produc'd in any soil,
This ground for wine is proper, that for oil.
So 'tis in men, but more in women-kind:
Diff'rent in face, in manners, and in mind:
But wise men shift their sails with ev'ry wind:
As changeful Proteus varied oft his shape,

And did in sundry forms and figures 'scape;
A running stream, a standing tree became,
A roaring lion, or a bleating lamb.
Some fish with harpons, some with darts are strook,
Some drawn with nets, some hang upon the hook:
So turn thyself; and, imitating them,
Try sev'ral tricks, and change thy stratagem.
One rule will not for diff'rent ages hold;
The jades grow cunning, as they grow more old.
Then talk not bawdy to the bashful maid;
Bug words will make her innocence afraid.
Nor to an ign'rant girl of learning speak;
She thinks you conjure, when you talk in Greek
And hence 'tis often seen, the simple shun
The learn'd, and into vile embraces run.
 Part of my task is done, and part to do;
But here 'tis time to rest myself and you.

The Poet

For MIGHTY wars I thought to tune my lute,
And make my measures to my subject suit.
Six feet for ev'ry verse the Muse design'd:
But Cupid, laughing, when he saw my mind,
From ev'ry second verse a foot purloin'd.
Who gave thee, boy, this arbitrary sway,
On subjects, not thy own, commands to lay,
Who Phoebus only and his laws obey?
'Tis more absurd than if the queen of love
Should in Minerva's arms to battle move;
Or manly Pallas from that queen should take
Her torch, and o'er the dying lover shake.
In fields as well may Cynthia sow the corn,
Or Ceres wind in woods the bugle horn.
As well may Phoebus quit the trembling string,
For sword and shield; and Mars may learn to sing.

Already thy dominions are too large;
Be not ambitious of a foreign charge.
If thou wilt reign e're all, and ev'ry where,
The God of music for his harp may fear.
Thus when with soaring wings I seek renown,
Thou pluck'st my pinions, and I flutter down.
Cou'd I on such mean thoughts my muse employ,
I want a mistress or a blooming boy.
Thus I complain'd: his bow the stripling bent,
And chose an arrow fit for his intent.
The shaft his purpose fatally pursues;
Now, Poet, there's a subject for thy muse.
He said, (too well, alas, he knows his trade,)
For in my breast a mortal wound he made.
Far hence, ye proud Hexameters, remove,
My verse is pac'd and tramel'd into love.
With myrtle wreaths my thoughtful brows inclose,
While in unequal verse I sing my woes.

To His Mistress

YOUR husband will be with us at the treat;
May that be the last supper he shall eat.
And am poor I, a guest invited there,
Only to see, while he may touch the fair?
To see you kiss and hug your nauseous lord,
While his lewd hand descends below the board?
Now wonder not that Hippodamia's charms,
At such a sight, the Centaurs urg'd to arms;
That in a rage they threw their cups aside,
Assail'd the bridegroom, and wou'd force the bride.
I am not half a horse, (I would I were:)
Yet hardly can from you my hands forbear.
Take then my counsel; which observ'd, may be
Of some importance both to you and me.
Be sure to come before your man be there;

There's nothing can be done; but come howe're.
Sit next him (that belongs to decency;)
But tread upon my foot in passing by.
Read in my looks what silently they speak,
And slily, with your eyes, your answer make.
My lifted eye-brow shall declare my pain;
My right-hand to his fellow shall complain;
And on the back a letter shall design;
Besides a note that shall be writ in wine.
When e're you think upon our last embrace,
With your fore-finger gently touch your face.
If any word of mine offend my dear,
Pull, with your hand, the velvet of your ear.
If you are pleas'd with what I do or say,
Handle your rings, or with your fingers play.
As suppliants use at altars, hold the board,
Whene're you wish the Devil may take your lord.
When he fills for you, never touch the cup;
But bid th' officious cuckold drink it up.
The waiter on those services employ;
Drink you, and I will snatch it from the boy:
Watching the part where your sweet mouth hath been,
And thence, with eager lips, will suck it in.
If he, with clownish manners, thinks it fit
To taste, and offer you the nasty bit,
Reject his greasy kindness, and restore
Th' unsav'ry morsel he had chew'd before.
Nor let his arms embrace your neck, nor rest
Your tender cheek upon his hairy breast.
Let not his hand within your bosom stray,
And rudely with your pretty bubbies play.
But above all, let him no kiss receive;
That's an offence I never can forgive.
Do not, O do not that sweet mouth resign,
Lest I rise up in arms, and cry, " 'Tis mine."
I shall thrust in betwixt, and void of fear
The manifest adult'rer will appear.

These things are plain to sight; but more I doubt
What you conceal beneath your petticoat.
Take not his leg between your tender thighs,
Nor, with your hand, provoke my foe to rise.
How many love-inventions I deplore,
Which I, myself, have practis'd all before?
How oft have I been forc'd the robe to lift
In company; to make a homely shift
For a bare bout, ill huddled o'er in haste,
While o'er my side the fair her mantle cast.
You to your husband shall not be so kind;
But, lest you shou'd, your mantle leave behind.
Encourage him to tope; but kiss him not,
Nor mix one drop of water in his pot.
If he be fuddled well, and snores apace
Then we may take advice from time and place.
When all depart, when compliments are loud,
Be sure to mix among the thickest crowd
There I will be, and there we cannot miss,
Perhaps to grubble, or at least to kiss
Alas, what length of labour I employ,
Just to secure a short and transient joy!
For night must part us: and when night is come,
Tuck'd underneath his arm he leads you home
He locks you in; I follow to the door,
His fortune envy, and my own deplore.
He kisses you, he more than kisses too;
Th' outrageous cuckold thinks it all his due.
But, add not to his joy, by your consent,
And let it not be giv'n, but only lent.
Return no kiss, nor move in any sort;
Make it a dull and a malignant sport.
Had I my wish, he shou'd no pleasure take,
But slubber o'er your business for my sake.
And what e're fortune shall this night befall,
Coax me tomorrow, by forswearing all.

Afternoon Diversions

It was a summer afternoon: the lattice by my bed,
One shutter closed, about the room a pleasant darkness shed,
Such as in forests oft you see, or when the twilight fades,
Or in the dusk of early dawn, well suited to fair maids
Who love to hide beneath its cloak their looks of modest shame:
And when it was, in tunic clad, Corinna to me came,
Her hair unbound about her neck, presage of future bliss,
More beautiful than Lais or than queen Semiramis.

At once I drew her tunic down—the fabric was so fine
That what it hid a lover's eye could easily divine—
She tried, 'tis true, to stay me; but 'twas very plain to see
That in our amorous strife she did not wish for victory,
And self-betrayed at last she stood, the tunic flung aside,
In all the flawless splendour of her beauty's naked pride.

I saw her shoulders and her arms and marked their loveliness;
I touched the apples of her breasts made for a fond caress;
I gazed upon her bosom and the smooth white plain below,
Her rounded flanks and slender thighs with youthful strength aglow.
But why say more, when every part alike was passing fair?
Unveiled I took her in my arms and held her captive there.
You know the rest. Worn out with love wearied at length we lay.
Such afternoons as this I hope may often come my way.

The Game

If for thy self thou wilt not watch thy whore,
Watch her for me, that I may love her more.
What comes with ease, we nauseously receive,
Who, but a sot, wou'd scorn to love with leave?
With hopes and fears my flames are blown up higher;
Make me despair, and then I can desire.
Give me a jilt to tease my jealous mind;
Deceits are virtues in the female kind.
Corinna my fantastic humour knew,
Play'd trick for trick, and kept her self still new:
She, that next night I might the sharper come,
Fell out with me, and sent me fasting home;
Or some pretence to lie alone would take,
Whene'er she pleas'd her head and teeth wou'd ache:
Till having won me to the highest strain,
She took occasion to be sweet again.
With what a gust, ye Gods, we then embrac'd!
How every kiss was dearer than the last!
 Thou whom I now adore, be edify'd,
Take care that I may often be deny'd.
Forget the promis'd hour, or feign some fright,
Make me lie rough on bulks each other night.
These are the arts that best secure thy reign,
And this the food that must my fires maintain.
Gross easy love does like gross diet, pall,
In squeasy stomachs honey turns to gall.
Had Danae not been kept in brazen tow'rs,
Jove had not thought her worth his golden show'rs.
When Juno to a cow turn'd Io's shape,
The watchman helpt her to a second leap.
Let him who loves an easy whetstone whore
Pluck leaves from trees, and drink the common shore.
The jilting harlot strikes the surest blow,

A truth which I by sad experience know.
The kind poor constant creature we despise,
Man but pursues the quarry while it flies.
But thou dull husband of a wife too fair,
Stand on thy guard, and watch the precious ware;
If creaking doors, or barking dogs thou hear,
Or windows scratcht, suspect a rival there.
An orange-wench wou'd tempt thy wife abroad;
Kick her, for she's a letter-bearing bawd;
In short, be jealous as the Devil in Hell,
And set my wit on work to cheat thee well.
The sneaking city cuckold is my foe,
I scorn to strike, but when he wards the blow.
Look to thy hits, and leave off thy conniving,
I'll be no drudge to any wittall living;
I have been patient, and forborn thee long,
In hope thou wou'dst not pocket up thy wrong:
If no affront can rouse thee, understand
I'll take no more indulgence at thy hand.
What, ne'er to be forbid thy house, and wife!
Damn him who loves to lead so dull a life.
Now I can neither sigh, nor whine, nor pray,
All those occasions thou hast ta'en away.
Why art thou so incorrigibly civil?
Do somewhat I may wish thee at the Devil.
For shame be no accomplice in my treason,
A pimping husband is too much in reason.
Once more wear horns, before I quite forsake her,
In hopes whereof I rest thy cuckold-maker.

On His Birthday

My NATAL day is come: alas! in vain!
Why was I born into a world of tears?
O cruel day! why hast thou come again
To swell an exile's miserable years?

'Twere kinder hadst thou come my doom to seal:
Even love or shame would make thee hence recoil—
If shame or love for me thou still couldst feel—
Why track me thus beyond my native soil?

Thou wouldst have seen me last within the home
Where, luckless child! my earliest birthday fell;
And, like my friends, when I was banished Rome,
Thou wouldst have said in sorrow, fare thee well!

Say, what has thou with Pontus? Has the ire
Of Caesar sent thee, too, to this cold land?
Dost thou thy wonted honours here require,
And shoulders with white raiment robed, demand?

Shall I flower-wreaths on thy glad altars lay?
Or in the solemn fire sweet incense burn?
Give festal cates to mark my natal day?
Or breathe one heartfelt prayer for its return?

No: joyful acts ill suit the mourning mind;
More fitly does my death-dark lot demand
The funeral altar with sad cypress twined,
The pyre erected, and the torch at hand.

I will not deign to offer incense here,
That moves not heaven to pity or to spare;
I cannot speak fair words where all is drear,
Ask if I must today, be this my prayer:—

Day of my birth! return thou never more
To these inhospitable, barren plains,
While Pontus, wellnigh earth's remotest shore,
Misnamed Euxinus, me in thrall detains.

MANILIUS

The Science of Nature

STARS conscious of our fates and arts divine,
The wondrous work of Heaven's first wise design,
In numerous verse I boldly first inclose;
Too high a subject, and too great for prose.
At what the ancients with a wild amaze
And ignorant wonder were content to gaze,
My verse brings down from Heav'n, design'd to show
Celestial secrets to the world below:
What yet the Muses groves ne'er heard, I sing,
And bring unusual offerings to their spring.
Rome's Prince and Father, Thou whose wide command
With awful sway is stretcht o'er sea and land,
Who dost deserve that heaven thy love bestow'd
On thy great father, thou thyself a God,
Now give me courage, make my fancy strong,
And yield me vigour for so great a song.
Nor doth the world this curious search refuse,
It kindly courts the daring of my Muse,
And will be known; whilst you serenely reign,
Instruct our labour, and reward our pain.
Wings raise my feet, I'm pleas'd to mount on high,
Trace all the mazes of the liquid sky,
Their various turnings, and their whirls declare,
And live in the vast regions of the air:
I'll know the stars, which yet alone to gain
Is knowledge mean, unequal to the pain;
For doubts resolv'd it no delight affords,

But fills soft empty heads with rattling words:
I'll search the depths, the most remote recess,
And flying Nature to confession press;
I'll find what sign and constellation rule,
And make the difference 'twixt the wise and fool;
My verse shall sing what various aspect reigns
When kings are doom'd to crowns and slaves to chains.
I'll turn Fate's books, there read proud Parthia's doom,
And see the sure eternity of Rome.
Two temples rais'd with sacred incense shine,
I bow at Nature's and the Muses' shrine;
Both aids I need, for double cares do throng,
And fill my thought; the subject and the song:
And whilst I'm bound to verse with orbs immense
The world rolls round me, and distracts my sense;
Vast is my theme, yet unconceiv'd, and brings
Untoward words scarce loos'ned from the things.
Who first below these wondrous secrets knew?
Who stole that knowledge which the World withdrew?
Whose soaring mind those airy mazes trod
And spite of Heaven desir'd to seem a God!
Open the skies, and teach how stars obey,
And run their race as Nature marks the way,
Their power and influence, what directs their course
What whirls them round, and what confines their force.
First Mercury disclos'd these mysteries,
By him we view the inside of the skies,
And know the stars, and now mankind admires
The power, not only lustre of their fires:
By him all know how great, how just and wise,
And good is the contriver of the skies;
At whose command the stars in order met,
Who times appointed when to rise and set;
That Heaven's great secrets may lie hid no more,
And man instructed gratefully adore.
Nature disclos'd herself, and from her springs
Pure streams deriv'd o'erflow'd the minds of kings,

Kings next to Heaven, who o'er the East did sway,
Where swift Euphrates cuts his rapid way,
Where Nile o'erflows, and whence the whirl restores
The day to us, and passing burns the Moors.
And next o'er priests, whose constant cares employ'd
In public service did oblige the god,
His presence did their holy minds inspire
With sacred flames, and rais'd their fancies higher,
Till by degrees to due perfection wrought
He made himself the object of their thought:
Such were those wondrous men who first from far
Lookt up, and saw fates hanging at each star:
Their thoughts extended did at once comprise
Ten thousand revolutions of the skies,
They markt the influence, and observ'd the power
Of every sign, and every fatal hour;
What tempers they bestow'd, what fortunes gave,
And who was doom'd a king, who born a slave;
How aspects vary, and their change creates,
Though little, great variety in fates.
Thus when the stars their mighty round had run,
And all were fixt whence first their race begun,
What hints experience did to search impart
They join'd, and observation grew to art;
Thus rules were fram'd, for by example shown
They knew what would be, from what had been done;
They saw the stars their constant round maintain,
Perform their course, and then return again;
They on their aspects saw the Fates attend,
Their change on their variety depend;
And thence they fixt unalterable laws,
Settling the same effect on the same cause.
Before that time life was an artless state
Of reason void, and thoughtless in debate:
Nature lay hid in deepest night below,
None knew her wonders, and none car'd to know:
Upward men look, they saw the circling light,

Pleas'd with the fires, and wond'red at the sight:
The sun, when night came on, withdrawn, they griev'd,
As dead, and joy'd next morn when he reviv'd;
But why the nights grow long or short, the day
Is chang'd, and the shades vary with the ray,
Shorter at his approach, and longer grown
At his remove, the causes were unknown:
For wit lay unimprov'd, the desert plains
Were unmanur'd, nor fed the idle swains:
Ev'n gold dwelt safe in hills, and none resign'd
Their lives to seas or wishes to the wind;
Confin'd their search, they knew themselves alone,
And thought that only worthy to be known:
But when long time the wretches' thoughts refin'd;
When want had set an edge upon their mind;
When men increast, and want did boldly press,
And forc'd them to be witty for redress;
Then various cares their working thoughts employ'd,
And that which each invented all enjoy'd.

Then corn first grew, then fruit enricht the grounds,
And barbarous noise was first confin'd to sounds:
Through seas unknown the sailor then was hurl'd,
And gainfull traffic join'd the distant world:
Then arts of war were found, and arts of peace,
For use is always fruitfull in increase.
New hints from settled arts experience gains,
Instructs our labour, and rewards our Pains:
Thus into many streams one spring divides,
And through the valleys rolls refreshing tides.
But these were little things compar'd, they knew
The voice of birds, in entrails fates could view;
Burst snakes with charms, and in a bullock's blood,
See rage appeas'd, or fear an angry God.
They call'd up ghosts, mov'd deepest Hell, the sun
Could stop, and force a night upon his noon;
Then make him rise at night, for all submit
To constant industry, and piercing wit.

Nor stopt they here, unwearied industry
Rose boldly up and mounted through the sky,
Saw all that could be seen, view'd Nature's laws,
And young effects still lying in their cause.
What wings the lightning, why from watry clouds
The thunder breaks, and roars the wrath of Gods.
What raiseth storms, what makes the winds to blow,
Why summer's hail's more stiff than winter's snow:
What fires earth's entrails, what doth shake the ball,
Why tempests rattle, and why rain doth fall:
All this she view'd, and did their modes explain,
And taught us to admire no more in vain.
Heaven was disarm'd, mad whirlwinds rul'd above,
And clouds and vapors thund'red instead of Jove.

These things explain'd, their hidden causes known,
The mind grew strong, and ventur'd boldly on;
For rais'd so high, from that convenient rise
She took her flight, and quickly reacht the skies;
To every constellation shapes and names
Assign'd, and markt them out their proper frames;
Then view'd their course, and saw the orbs were mov'd
As Heaven did guide, and as the world approv'd;
That chance was baffled whilst their whirls create
The interchang'd variety of Fate.

The Rarity of True Friendship

So MANY sorts of differing signs dispose
Mens' tempers, and produce such crowds of foes;
Look o'er the world, see force and fraud increase,
Rapine in war, and treachery in peace;
But look for truth and faith, the search were vain,
No mind is honest, and no thoughts are plain:
What bulky villanies bestride the age!
What envy pusheth on mankind to rage!
Envy not to be dispossest, her throne

Is firmly fixt, and all the world's her own.
Friends kill their friends, a husband stabs his wife,
Sons sell their father's and their mother's life;
Bold Atreus feasts, and at the barbarous sight
The sun retires, and leaves the world to night.
Whilst brothers poison, with a smiling face
They mix the cup, and kill where they embrace:
No place is safe, no temple yields defence
Against secret stabs, or open violence;
And many a slaughter'd priest profanely dies
On the same altar with his sacrifice.
Those most betray who kindness most pretend,
And crowds of villains skulk behind the name of friend.
The world's infected, wrong and fraud prevails,
Whilst honesty retires, and justice fails;
Nay, laws support those crimes they checkt before,
And executions now affright no more.
For disagreeing stars that men produce,
Their tempers fashion, and their own infuse:
Hence peace is lost, pure faith we seldom find,
Kind leagues are rare, and then but feebly bind;
For as the signs above, so things below
Do differing minds and inclinations show;
They form men's thoughts, and the obedient clay
Takes disagreeing tempers from their ray.
 Hence 'tis that Friendship is so thinly sown,
It thrives but ill, nor can it last when grown;
Rare its production: and the world pretends
To boast but one poor single pair of friends:
One Pylades and one Orestes name,
And you have all the instances of fame;
Once death was strove for, 'twas a generous strife,
Not who should keep, but who should lose a life
Was their dispute, contending to deny
Each other the great privilege to die.
The surety fear'd his guilty friend's return,
The guilty friend did his own absence mourn;

Careless of life, impatient of delay,
He broke thro' hind'ring friends that chok'd his way,
And ran to danger: Here they disagreed,
One hop'd to free, one fear'd to be so freed.

The Rule of Fate

WHY SHOULD our time run out in useless years,
Of anxious troubles and tormenting fears?
Why should deluding hopes disturb our ease,
Vain to pursue, yet eager to possess?
With no success, and no advantage crown'd,
Why should we still tread on th' unfinisht round?
Grown gray in cares, pursue the senseless strife,
And seeking how to live, consume a life?
The more we have, the meaner is our store;
The unenjoying craving wretch is poor:
But Heaven is kind, with bounteous hand it grants
A fit supply for Nature's sober wants:
She asks not much, yet men press blindly on,
And heap up more, to be the more undone:
By luxury, they rapine's force maintain,
What that scrapes up, flows out in luxury again;
And to be squander'd, or to raise debate,
Is the great only use of an estate.
 Vain man forbear, of cares, unload thy mind,
Forget thy hopes, and give thy fears to wind;
For Fate rules all, its stubborn laws must sway
The lower world, and man confin'd obey.
As we are born we die, our lots are cast,
And our first hour disposeth of our last.
Then as the influence of the stars ordains,
To empires kings are doom'd, and slaves to chains.
Then poverty, that common fate comes down,
(Few stars are regal, and design a crown)
What make a wit, a knave, a saint, or dunce,

Are huddled then together, and fixt at once.
The ills that are ordain'd we must endure,
From not decreed how fatally secure?
Prayers are too weak to check fixt destinies,
And vows too slow to catch the fate that flies.
Whether with glory rais'd, or clogg'd with scorn,
The state, that then is settled, must be born.
For did not Fate preside, and Fortune lead,
Had parting flames the good Aeneas fled?
Had Troy's sunk fortune been sustain'd by one?
And only conquer'd then, when overthrown?
And did not stars the rise of states dispose,
Had mighty Rome from such beginnings rose?
Had shepherds built, or swains without control
Advanc'd their cottage to a capitol?
Plac'd on whose heights, our Caesars now survey
The lower earth, and see the world obey?
From their burnt nest, had conquering eagles flown,
And the world yielded to a ruin'd town?
Had Jove been storm'd; or Mutius safe return'd
From baffled flames, or vanquish'd whilst he burn'd?
Our towns and bridges guard, had Cocles stood,
Or the weak virgin swam rough Tiber's flood?
Had one Horatius our sunk hopes restor'd,
Or three have fall'n beneath a single sword?
O glorious victory! what arms before,
E're won so much, none ever fought for more;
Rome and her hopes of empire hung on one,
His o'er matcht lot was hers, a yoke or throne.
Why should I Cannae's bloody plains relate,
And Africk's ensigns threatning at our gate,
How Thrasymene drown'd Flaminius's shame,
And after Fabius, wise retreats o'ercame,
The conquer'd Carthage shone with Roman flame?
How Hannibal on the Campanian plains,
Rome's terror once, then destin'd to our chains;
Whilst waiting on his proud Bithynian lord,

Stole a base death, and scap't our nobler sword?
But turn and view the civil wars of Rome,
There opens wide a various scene of doom:
See Marcus ride with Cimbrian laurels crown'd,
Then in the dungeon stretcht upon the ground;
Now slave, now consul, consul, slave again,
His curule chair, succeeded by a chain;
Now a mean ruin on the Libyan sands
Despis'd he lies, and straight the world commands;
Like thunder from low earth exhal'd, he rose
From the Minturnian pools,
And scatter'd vengeance on his haughty foes.
These wondrous changes Fate and stars advance,
O mighty turns, and much too great for chance!
Who, Pompey, could (that saw thy conquering fleet
Regain the seas, and kings beneath thy feet,
Proud Pontus yield, fierce tyrants make thy train,
And crowding monarchs beg thy leave to reign,
That saw victorious laurels crown thy head,
And worlds in thy repeated triumphs lead;
And all that glory which thy sword had won,
Fixt and supported by as great a son)
Have thought that thou, upon a foreign sand,
Should'st steal a burial from a common hand;
That shatter'd planks, the sea's dishonest spoil
Should rise beneath thy trunk, and be thy pile?
That thou, the mighty thou, should'st want an urn,
What power, but Fate, could work so strange a turn?
E'en Caesar sprung from heaven, and now a star,
Tho' midst the dangers of the civil war,
Secure he stood, and careless of repose,
Was ne'er surpriz'd by his most watchful foes;
Yet crown'd with peace, in all his pomp and state
He fell a victim to o'er-ruling Fate:
No dark suspicions, but bright hints were brought,
He knew what Cassius spoke, and Brutus thought;
How far advanc'd, how far they meant to go,

And saw the minute of the fatal blow:
Yet dark oblivion did his memory blot,
He all his warnings, and himself forgot;
And in the senate, whilst his right hand held
The faithful bill, which all the plot reveal'd;
To prove that Fate will sway, and stars control,
He fell, and with his blood defac'd the scroll:
O mighty power of fate, and prov'd too well!
The best, the wisest, and the greatest fell.

Why should I mention kings' and empires' falls,
Shew conquering Cyrus on the Sardian walls?
Or Croesus shrinking at the rising flame?
Or Priam's trunk, a thing without a name?
Unhappy prince! the beasts' and vultures' spoil,
His Troy was burnt, but Priam wants a pile.
The wreck of Xerxes, who wou'd scourge the gods,
A wreck, much greater than the threat'ned floods?
Or Tullus's reign, who by the power of Fate,
Was born a slave, yet rul'd the Roman state?
Or shew Metellus snatch the Vestal fire,
And as he pass'd, profaner flames retire?

How oft do sudden deaths the healthy seize,
Without the formal warning of disease?
And yet how often from the piles retire,
E'en fly themselves, and wander thro' the fire?
Thus some have from their graves return'd, and known
Two lives, whilst others, scarce enjoy but one.
A small disease destroys, whilst greater spare,
Good methods fail, and men are lost by care.
Some temperate diet, with diseases fills,
And poison's innocent, when physic kills.

Some children prove a mean degenerate race,
Some shew their father's mind, as well as face;
In one, their virtue, and their fortune rise
To greater height, and in another dies.
One mad in love, to Troy will carry war,
Or swim the flood, and view the torch from far,

The other is determin'd to the bar.
A son his father, father kills the son
On mutual wounds two headlong brothers run;
These combats prove the force of ruling powers,
For they are too unnatural to be ours.
That every age no new Camilli's breath,
The Decii die, or Cato conquer death,
'Tis not but that the seed can still receive
As noble stamps, but Fates refuse to give.
To fewer days they do not cramp the poor,
Nor brib'd by wealth, enlarg'd the rich with more;
There riches lose their force, the shining years
Of glorious tyrants must be turn'd in tears,
They dig a grave for kings, and fix the day,
How great must be that power which crowns obey!
Successless virtue sinks whilst vice prevails,
And folly wins the prize when prudence fails:
He argues ill that from the fortune draws
The goodness or the badness of a cause:
Success or merit do not always crown,
Midst good and bad men they are blindly thrown,
Without respect, fixt fatally on one.
For some superior power's impetuous force
Marks out our way, and still directs the course;
The years that we must run, the length, the pace,
And all the various turnings of the race.
Besides, what monstrous births, the nurses fear
And mother's shame, half man, half beast appear?
Such wondrous creatures ne'er from seed began,
For what hath beast that's common to a man?
And what mean soul would with his lust comply,
And sin on purpose for a prodigy?
No; stars dispose, they counterfeit a rape,
And mix a monster of amazing shape.
Besides, were not events by Fates enrol'd,
How can their certain order be foretold?
How can the prophets sing of future doom,

And in the present read the age to come?
To this there's one objection; Fate denies
Rewards to virtue, and must plead for vice:
Absurd; for who less hates a poisonous weed
Because 'tis bred from necessary seed?
Or who loves corn the less; who hates the vine
Because by Nature rais'd, and not design?
Thus virtuous minds deserve the greater love,
Since Heaven consents, and all the stars approve;
And we should hate those more whom Fates have sent
To commit crimes and suffer punishment;
For how, or whence these noxious faults begin
No matter, since each is certainly a sin.
Nay this opinion's settled by debate,
'Tis Fate that we should thus dispute of Fate.

Andromeda

NEXT shines Andromeda; she leaves the sea,
And on the right joins Pisces' twelfth degree.
Bright she appears, and gay with sparkling fires,
As when young Perseus first felt warm desires.
Unhappy maid! expos'd to rage divine,
A faultless victim for her mother's sin:
When seas let loose o'erflow'd the fruitful plain,
And earth now fear'd its ruin from the main;
Nought could appease, but to the injur'd flood
The maid resign'd, to quench its rage with blood.
This was her bridal, in her robes of state;
But not provided for so sad a fate,
Glorious she lookt, and like the setting sun,
Greater, tho' not so fierce, her beauty shone,
No joyful torch its ominous flames did spread,
No vows were heard to crown her fruitful bed;
But groans and tears, e're death pronounc'd her doom
The maid was borne alive to her own tomb.

Hence fly my Muse, and on the naked shore
Leave the poor maid, and dare to look no more;
'Twill melt thy song to turn again to view,
The weeping parents bid their last adieu;
To see her fetter'd, and expos'd to pain,
Design'd by nature for another chain:
To see her hang on rocks, and by her side
Grim Death appear, and point to the swoln tide.
Yet turn, and view how she her shape retains,
How fair she looks, and glorious in her chains:
With what becoming fear her flowing vest
Forsakes her limbs, and leaves her naked breast:
What hidden beauties are expos'd to sight,
Like lightning glare, but must be lost in night.
By her the Halcyons mourn'd, and round the coast,
That so much beauty should in vain be lost,
The Nymphs repin'd; and Nereis from the deep
Bewail'd her fate, and did consent to weep:
The gentle breeze that fann'd her golden locks,
Turn'd into sighs, and murmur'd to the rocks:
All nature seem'd concern'd, despairing grief
Was general, but too weak to yield relief.
Then Perseus, glorious with the Gorgon's spoil,
By love directed to a nobler toil,
Kind fortune brought; and at the wondrous sight
He checkt his horse, and stopt his airy flight;
His hand scarce held his spoil, Medusa's eyes
He bore, but now grew stiff at this surprise;
The chains that held her, and the burth'ned stone
He happy call'd, and envy'd joys unknown.
Amaz'd a while he hung, her form survey'd,
Then heard the story from the weeping maid;
Straight in his breast high generous thoughts were bred,
To spoil the ocean to adorn his bed:
And should a thousand frightful Gorgons rise,
He would oppose them for so vast a prize:
Fixt on these thoughts he leaves the mournful shore,

Her parents cheers, and bids them weep no more,
For aid was come: and their consent desir'd
Was granted soon, and nobler warmth inspir'd.
Back he returns: now teeming seas did roar,
Waves fled the monster, and o'erflow'd the shore;
High rais'd his head, he spouts the floods around,
All Nereus echoes, and the shores resound:
Wide gapes his mouth, and as on a vast rock
Dasht on each tooth the foaming billows broke:
His winding tail o'er half the main was spread,
The ocean groan'd, rocks fear'd, and mountains fled:
 Unhappy maid! though such an aid was near,
What was thy mind, and how surpris'd with fear?
How pale thy look? and how thy spirit fled
In a deep sigh, and hover'd round thy head?
How bloodless all thy limbs, when from deep caves
The monster rush'd, and bore the foaming waves
And fate along? and all design'd for thee
A prey how little, for so vast a sea!
 But Perseus' nimble aid descends, and hides
The Gorgon's fauchion in his scaly sides;
He twists upon the wound, then strives to rear
His head, and shoots up forward thro' the air:
Perseus retires, and still deludes his foe,
Hangs in the sky, and aims a surer blow:
He presses on, and casts his jaws around,
Bites at the air, but bites without a wound.
Then tosses seas to heaven, spouts purple floods
At his high foe, and drowns him in the clouds.
The maid beheld this fight, and, grateful grown,
Fear'd for his danger, but forgot her own,
Doubtful which way the various fate inclin'd,
In body less suspended than in mind:
Her doubt not long; for now success did prove
The great advantage, and the force of love,
The monster groan'd, and from his wounds there flow'd
A mighty stream, and stain'd the seas with blood.

Down deep he sinks, but soon he floats again,
And his vast carcass covers all the main;
Breathless he lay, yet then his shape did fright;
Tho' dead, he was too dreadful for her sight.
Now big with conquest, from the cleansing flood
Bright Perseus rose, and more august he stood;
Then to the rocks with eager haste he flies,
Unbinds the virgin, and enjoys the prize.
And hence Andromeda now shines a star,
The cause, and the reward of such a war,
As freed the ocean, and restor'd the main
To Neptune's sway, and fixt him in his reign.
And he that sees her rising beams, shall draw
The sword of justice, and shall smite by law;
Dungeons shall be, and whips and racks his care,
Steel'd against pity, and averse to spare.
At his stern feet shall wretched wives complain,
And weeping mothers tell their grief in vain:
Though late at night to kiss a parting son,
And draw his flying soul into his own;
A father sues, in unrelenting ears
His prayers are lost, nor shall he yield to tears.
Or lean pale hangmen shall her beams create,
Those solemn murderers and slaves to fate:
Who on the curses of the pitying crowd
Ignobly thrive, and live on shedding blood.
But he that sees her chain'd to rocks, shall find
A meaner fortune, though as fierce a mind;
A gaoler he shall be, secure for pains
Poor slaves, and be a partner of their chains.

PERSIUS

The Vanity of Verse

ALAS, for man! How vain are all his cares!
And oh! what bubbles, his most grave affairs!
Tush! who will read such trite—Heavens! this to me?
Not one, by Jove. Not one? Well, two, or three;
Or rather—none: a piteous case, in truth!
Why piteous? lest Polydamas, forsooth,
And Troy's proud dames, pronounce my merits fall
Beneath their Labeo's! I can bear it all.
Nor should my friend, though still, as fashion sways,
The purblind town conspire to sink or raise,
Determine, as her wavering beam prevails,
And trust his judgment to her coarser scales.
O not abroad for vague opinion roam,
The wise man's bosom is his proper home:
And Rome is—What? Ah, might the truth be told!—
And, sure it may, it must.—When I behold
What fond pursuits have formed our prime employ,
Since first we dropt the play-things of the boy,
To grey maturity, to this late hour,
When every brow frowns with censorial power,
Then, then——O yet suppress this carping mood.
Impossible! I could not if I would;
For nature framed me of satiric mould,
And spleen, too petulant to be controlled.
Immured within our studies, we compose;
Some, shackled metre; some, free-footed prose,
But all, bombast: stuff, which the breast may strain,

And the huge lungs puff forth with awkward pain.
'Tis done! and now the bard, elate and proud,
Prepares a grand rehearsal for the crowd.
Lo! he steps forth in birthday splendour bright,
Combed and perfumed, and robed in dazzling white;
And mounts the desk; his pliant throat he clears,
And deals, insidious, round his wanton leers:
While Rome's first nobles, by the prelude wrought,
Watch, with indecent glee, each prurient thought,
And squeal with rapture, as the luscious line
Thrills through the marrow, and inflames the chine.
Vile dotard! Canst thou thus consent to please!
To pander for such itching fools as these!
Fools,—whose applause must shoot beyond thy aim,
And tinge thy cheek, bronzed as it is, with shame!
But wherefore have I learned, if, thus represt,
The leaven still must swell within my breast?
If the wild fig-tree, deeply rooted there,
Must never burst its bounds, and shoot in air?
Are these the fruits of study! these of age!
O times, O manners!—Thou misjudging sage,
Is science only useful as 'tis shown,
And is thy knowledge nothing, if not known?
But, sure, 'tis pleasant, as we walk, to see
The pointed finger, hear the loud 'That's he,'
On every side:—and seems it, in your sight,
So poor a trifle, that whate'er we write
Is introduced to every school of note,
And taught the youth of quality by rote?
—Nay, more! Our nobles, gorged, and swilled with wine,
Call, o'er the banquet, for a lay divine.
Here one, on whom the princely purple glows,
Snuffles some musty legend through his nose;
Slowly distils Hypsipyle's sad fate,
And love-lorn Phyllis, dying for her mate,
With what of woeful else is said or sung;
And trips up every word, with lisping tongue.

The maudlin audience, from the couches round,
Hum their assent, responsive to the sound.———
And are not now the poet's ashes blest!
Now lies the turf not lightly on his breast!
They pause a moment—and again, the room
Rings with his praise: now will not roses bloom,
Now, from his relics, will not violets spring,
And o'er his hallowed urn their fragrance fling!
You laugh, ('tis answered,) and too freely here
Indulge that vile propensity to sneer.
Lives there, who would not at applause rejoice,
And merit, if he could, the public voice?
Who would not leave posterity such rhymes,
As cedar oil might keep to latest times;
Rhymes, which should fear no desperate grocer's hand,
Nor fly with fish and spices through the land!
Thou, my kind monitor, whoe'er thou art,
Whom I suppose to play the opponent's part,
Know—when I write, if chance some happier strain
(And chance it needs must be) rewards my pain,
Know, I can relish praise with genuine zest;
Not mine the torpid, mine the unfeeling breast:
But that I merely toil for this acclaim,
And make these eulogies my end and aim,
I must not, cannot grant: for—sift them all,
Mark well their value, and on what they fall:
Are they not showered (to pass these trifles o'er)
On Labeo's Iliad, drunk with hellebore?
On princely love-lays drivelled without thought,
And the crude trash on citron couches wrought?
You spread the table—'tis a master-stroke,
And give the shivering guest a threadbare cloak,
Then, while his heart with gratitude dilates
At the glad vest and the delicious cates,
Tell me, you cry,—for truth is my delight,
What says the Town of me, and what I write?
He cannot:—he has neither ears nor eyes.

But shall I tell you, who your bribes despise?
—Bald trifler! cease at once your thriftless trade;
That mountain paunch for verse was never made.
O Janus, happiest of thy happy kind!—
No waggish stork can peck at thee behind;
No tongue thrust forth, expose to passing jeers;
No twinkling fingers, perked like ass's ears,
Point to the vulgar mirth:—but you, ye Great,
To a blind occiput condemned by fate,
Prevent, while yet you may, the rabble's glee,
And tremble at the scoff you cannot see!—
"What says the Town"—precisely what it ought:
All you produce, sir, with such skill is wrought,
That o'er the polished surface, far and wide,
The critic nail without a jar must glide;
Since every verse is drawn as straight and fine
As if one eye had fixed the ruddled line.
—Whate'er the subject of his varied rhymes,
The humours, passions, vices of the times;
The pomp of nobles, barbarous pride of kings,
All, all is great, and all inspired he sings!
Lo! striplings, scarcely from the ferule freed,
And smarting yet from Greek, with headlong speed
Rush on heroics; though devoid of skill
To paint the rustling grove, or purling rill;
Or praise the country, robed in cheerful green,
Where hogs, and hearths, and ozier frails are seen,
And happy hinds, who leap o'er smouldering hay,
In honour, Pales, of thy sacred day.
—Scenes of delight!—there Remus lived, and there,
In grassy furrows, Quinctius tired his share;
Quinctius, on whom his wife, with trembling haste,
The dictatorial robes, exulting, placed,
Before his team; while homeward, with his plough,
The lictors hurried—Good! a Homer, thou!
There are, who hunt out antiquated lore;
And never, but on musty authors, pore;

These, Accius' jagged and knotty lines engage,
And those, Pacuvius' hard and horny page;
Where, in quaint tropes, Antiopa is seen
To—prop her dolorific heart with teen!
O, when you mark the sire, to judgment blind,
Commend such models to the infant mind,
Forbear to wonder whence this olio sprung,
This sputtering jargon which infests our tongue;
This scandal of the times, which shocks my ear,
And which our knights bound from their seats to hear!
How monstrous seems it, that we cannot plead,
When called to answer for some felon deed,
Nor danger from the trembling head repel,
Without a wish for—Bravo! Vastly well!
This Pedius is a thief, the accusers cry.
You hear them, Pedius: now, for your reply?
In terse antitheses he weighs the crime,
Equals the pause, and balances the chime;
And with such skill his flowery tropes employs,
That the rapt audience scarce contain their joys.
"O charming! charming! he must sure prevail."
This, charming! Can a Roman wag the tail?
Were the wrecked mariner to chant his woe,
Should I or sympathy or alms bestow?
Sing you, when, in that tablet on your breast,
I see your story to the life exprest;
A shattered bark, dashed madly on the shore,
And you, scarce floating, on a broken oar?—
No, he must feel that would my pity share,
And drop a natural, not a studied tear.
But yet our numbers boast a grace unknown
To our rough sires, a smoothness all our own.
True: the spruce metre in sweet cadence flows,
And answering sounds a tuneful chime compose:
Blue Nereus here, the Dolphin swift divides;
And Idè there, sees Attin climb her sides:
Nor this alone—for, in some happier line,

We win the chine of the long Apennine!
"Arms and the man"—Here, too, perhaps, you find
A pithless branch beneath a fungous rind?
Not so;—a seasoned trunk of many a day,
Whose gross and watery parts are drawn away.
But what, in fine, (for still you jeer me,) call
For the moist eye, bowed head, and lengthened drawl
What strains of genuine pathos?——O'er the hill
The dismal slug-horn sounded, loud and shrill,
A Mimallonian blast: fired at the sound,
In maddening groups the Bacchants pour around,
Mangle the haughty calf with gory hands,
And scourge the indocile lynx with ivy wands;
While Echo lengthens out the barbarous yell,
And propagates the din from cell to cell!
O were not every spark of manly sense,
Of pristine vigour quenched, or banished hence,
Could this be borne! this cuckoo-spit of Rome,
Which gathers round the lips in froth and foam!
—The haughty calf, and Attin's jangling strain,
Dropt, without effort, from the rheumy brain;
No savour they of bleeding nails afford,
Or desk, oft smitten for the happy word.
But why must you, alone, displeased appear,
And with harsh truths thus grate the tender ear?
O yet beware! think of the closing gate!
And dread the cold reception of the great:
This currish humour you extend too far,
While every word growls with that hateful gnar!
Right! From this hour, (for now my fault I see,)
All shall be charming—charming all, for me:
What late seemed base, already looks divine,
And wonders start to view in every line!
" 'Tis well," you cry: "this spot let none defile,
Or turn to purposes obscene and vile."
Paint, then, two snakes entwined; and write around,
Urine not, children, here; 'tis holy ground.

Awed, I retire: and yet—when vice appeared,
Lucilius o'er the town his falchion reared;
On Lupus, Mutius, poured his rage by name,
And broke his grinders on their bleeding fame.
And yet—arch Horace, while he strove to mend,
Probed all the foibles of his smiling friend;
Played lightly round and round the peccant part,
And won, unfelt, an entrance to his heart:
Well skilled the follies of the crowd to trace,
And sneer, with gay good humour in his face.
And I!—I must not mutter? No; nor dare—
Not to myself? No. To a ditch? No where.
Yes, here I'll dig—here, to sure trust confide
The secret which I would, but cannot, hide.
My darling book, a word;—"King Midas wears
(These eyes beheld them, these!) such ass's ears!"—
This quip of mine, which none must hear, or know
This fond conceit, which takes my fancy so,
This nothing, if you will; you should not buy
With all those Iliads that you prize so high.
But thou, whom Eupolis' impassioned page,
Hostile to vice, inflames with kindred rage,
Whom bold Cratinus, and that awful sire,
Force, as thou readest, to tremble and admire;
O, view my humbler labours:—there, if aught
More highly finished, more maturely wrought,
Detain thy ear, and give thy breast to glow
With warmth, responsive to the inspiring flow—
I seek no further:—Far from me the rest,
Yes, far the wretch, who, with a low-born jest,
Can mock the blind for blindness, and pursue
With vulgar ribaldry the Grecian shoe:
Bursting with self-conceit, with pride elate,
Because, forsooth, in magisterial state,
His worship (aedile of some paltry town)
Broke scanty weights, and put false measures down.
Far too be he—the monstrous witty fool,

Who turns the numeral scale to ridicule;
Derides the problems traced in dust or sand,
And treads out all Geometry has planned—
Who roars outright to see Nonaria seize,
And tug the cynic's beard—To such as these
I recommend, at morn, the Praetor's bill,
At eve, Calirrhoë, or—what they will.

SENECA

Life's End

As WHEN the eager people haste
Throughout the city to behold
The play in some new theatre;
As when they crowd the Pisan fields
When the fifth summer brings again
The Elean Thunderer's sacred games,
As, when the lengthening nights return,
And the balanced Scales the sun's bright car
Detain, to gentle sleep inclined,
The people throng the mysteries
Of Ceres, while the Attic priests
Lead through the fields with hurried steps
The worshippers: such thronging hordes
Are driven through those silent plains.
A part goes slow with steps of age,
Sadly, and sated with the years;
Some, in the earlier flush of life,
Advance with the sprightly step of youth,
Young maids not yet in wedlock joined,
And boys with flowing ringlets, babes,
Who have not yet learned to repeat
Their mother's name. To these alone
'Tis given to dispel the night
With torches, and their fears relieve.
The rest in utter darkness fare,
And sadness. So our spirits mourn,
When each one, grieving o'er his fate,

Feels crushed in darkness 'neath the weight
Of all the world. There chaos reigns,
Repulsive glooms, the hateful dark
Of night, the empty veil of clouds,
The weary inactivity
Of that still, empty universe.
Oh, may the time far distant be
When old age bears us to that land.
None come too late, and ne'er can he,
Who once has come, return again.
What need to hasten cruel fate?
For all the wandering tribes of earth
Shall surely seek the land of shades,
And on the still Cocytus spread
Their sails; all things the sun beholds,
In rising and in setting, grow
But to decay. Then spare, O death,
Those who are doomed to come to thee.
Life is but practicing for death;
Though thou be slow in coming, still
We hasten of ourselves. The hour
Which gave us life begins our death.

Beauty Is Fleeting

AH BEAUTY, a doubtful boon art thou,
The gift of a fleeting hour! How swift
On flying feet thou glidest away!
So flowery meadows of the spring
The summer's burning heat devours,
When midday's raging sun rides high,
And night's brief round is hurried through.
As the lilies languish on their stems,
So pleasing tresses fail the head;
And swiftly is the radiance dimmed
Which gleams from the tender cheeks of youth!

Each day hath its spoil from the lovely form;
For beauty flees and soon is gone.
Who then would trust a gift so frail?
Nay, use its joys, while still thou mayst;
For silent time will soon destroy thee,
And hours to baser hours steal on.
Why seek the desert wilds? Thy form
Is no more safe in pathless ways.
If in the forest's depths thou hide,
When Titan brings the noonday heat,
The saucy Naids will surround thee,
Who are wont in their clear springs to snare
The lovely youth; and 'gainst thy sleep
The wanton goddesses of groves,
The Dryads, who the roving Pans
Drive in pursuit, will mischief plot.

Is Death Naught?

When in the tomb the dead is laid,
When the last rites of love are paid;
When eyes no more behold the light,
Closed in the sleep of endless night;
Survives there aught, can we believe?
Or does an idle tale deceive?
What boots it, then, to yield the breath
A willing sacrifice to death,
If still we gain no dreamless peace,
And find from living no release?
Say, do we, dying, end all pain?
Does no least part of us remain?
When from this perishable clay
The flitting breath has sped away;
Does then the soul that dissolution share
And vanish into elemental air?
Whate'er the morning sunbeam knows,

Whate'er his setting rays disclose;
Whate'er is bathed by Ocean wide,
In ebbing or in flowing tide:
Time all shall snatch with hungry greed,
With mythic Pegasean speed.
Swift is the course of stars in flight,
Swiftly the moon repairs her light;
Swiftly the changing seasons go,
While time speeds on with endless flow:
But than all these, with speed more swift,
Towards fated nothingness we drift.
For when within the tomb we're laid,
No soul remains, no hov'ring shade.
Like curling smoke, like clouds before the blast,
This animating spirit soon has passed.
Since naught remains, and death is naught
But life's last goal, so swiftly sought;
Let those who cling to life abate
Their fond desires, and yield to fate;
And those who fear death's fabled gloom,
Bury their cares within the tomb.
Soon shall grim time and yawning night
In their vast depths engulf us quite;
Impartial death demands the whole—
The body slays nor spares the soul.
Dark Taenara and Pluto fell,
And Cerberus, grim guard of hell—
All these but empty rumours seem,
The pictures of a troubled dream.
Where then will the departed spirit dwell?
Let those who never came to being tell.

Epithalamium for a Second Marriage

Now ON our royal nuptials graciously smiling,
Here may the lords of heaven and the deeps of the ocean
Come while the people feast in pious rejoicing!

First to the gods who sway the sceptre of heaven,
Pealing forth their will in the voice of thunder,
Let the white bull his proud head bow in tribute.

Then to the fair Lucina, her gift we offer,
White as the driven snow, this beautiful heifer,
Still with her neck untouched by the yoke of bondage.

Thou who alone canst rule the heart of the war-god,
Thou who linkest in peace the opposing nations,
Out of thy generous hand abundance pouring—
Thee we offer a daintier gift, O Concord!

Thou who, on the marriage torches attending,
Night's dark gloom with favouring hand dispellest,
Hither come with languishing footstep drunken,
Binding thy temples fair with garlands of roses!

Star of the evening, thou who to twilight leadest
The day, and hailest again the dawn of the morning,
All too slowly thou com'st for lovers impatient,
Eager to see thy sign in the glow of the sunset.

The fairest of girls is she,
The Athenian maids outshining,
Or the Spartan maiden with armour laden,
No burden of war declining.

Not by Alpheus' sacred stream,
Nor Boeotia's musical water,
Is there any fair who can compare
With our lovely Corinthian daughter.

Our Thessalian prince excels,
In beauty of form and face,
Even Bacchus, the son of the fierce-flaming one,
Who yokes the wild tigers in place.

The murmuring tripod's lord,
Though the fairest in heavenly story,
The twins with their star bright gleaming afar—
All yield to our Jason in glory.

When in her train of courtly maidens she mingles—
Like the bright sunshine paling the starry splendour,
Or the full moonlight quenching the Pleiads' brilliance,
So does she shine, all peerless, of fair ones the fairest.

Now, O Jason, freed from the hateful wedlock
That held thee bound to the barbarous Colchian woman,
Joyfully wed the fair Corinthian maiden,
While at last her parents' blessings attend thee.

Ho then, youths, with licensed jest and rejoicing,
Loud let the songs of gladness ring through the city;
Rarely against our lords such freedom is given.

Fair and noble band of Bacchus, the thyrsus-bearer,
Now is the time to light the glittering torches of pinewood.
Shake on high the festal fire with languishing fingers;

Now let the bold and merry Fescennine laughter and jesting
Sound through our ranks. Let Medea fare in silence and darkness,
If perchance another lord she shall wed in her exile.

The Mind a Kingdom Is

THE ANCIENT race of royal Inachus
At last has laid aside fraternal threats.
What madness drove you, that by turns you shed
Each other's blood and sought to mount the throne
By crime? You know not, eager for high place,
What kingly station means. It is not wealth

That makes the king, nor robes of Tyrian dye,
'Tis not the crown upon the royal brow,
Nor gates made bright with gold; a king is he
Whose hard heart has forgotten fear and pain,
Whom impotent ambition does not move,
Nor the inconstant favour of the crowd,
Who covets nothing that the west affords,
Nor aught that Tagus' golden waves wash up
From its bright channels, nor the grain thrashed out
Upon the glowing Libyan threshing-floors,
Who neither fears the falling thunderbolt,
Nor Eurus stirring all the sea to wrath,
Nor windy Adriatic's swelling rage;
Who is not conquered by a soldier's lance,
Nor the drawn sword; who, seated on safe heights,
Sees everything beneath him; who makes haste
Freely to meet his fate, nor grieves to die.
Let kings who vex the scattered Scythians come,
Who hold the Red Sea's shore, the pearl-filled sea,
Or who intrenched upon the Caspian range
To bold Sarmatians close the way, who breast
The Danube's waves, or those who dare pursue
And spoil the noble Seres where'er they dwell.
The mind a kingdom is; there is no need
Of horse, or weapon, or the coward dart
Which from afar the Parthian hurls and flees—
Or seems to flee, no need to overthrow
Cities with engines that hurl stones afar,
When one possesses in himself his realm.
Whoever will may on the slippery heights
Of empire stand, but I with sweet repose
Am satisfied, rejoice in gentle ease,
And, to my fellow citizens unknown,
My life shall flow in calm obscurity,
And when, untouched by storm, my days have passed,
Then will I die, a common citizen,
In good old age. Death seemeth hard to him

Who dies but too well known to all the world,
Yet knowing not himself.

Fortune

No FORTUNE long endures:
Sorrows and pleasures each in turn depart,
But pleasure soonest; from the fairest heights
An hour may plunge one to the lowest depths;
He who upon his forehead wears a crown,
Who nods and Medians lay aside the sword,
Indians, too, near neighbours of the sun,
And Dacians that assail the Parthian horse,
He holds his sceptre with an anxious hand,
Forsees the overthrow of all his joy,
And fears uncertain time and fickle chance.
Ye whom the ruler of the earth and sea
Has given power over life and death,
Be not so proud, a stronger threatens you
With whatsoever ills the weaker fears
From you; each realm is by a greater ruled.
Him whom the rising sun beholds in power
The setting sees laid low. Let none confide
Too much in happiness, let none despair
When he has fallen from his high estate,
For Clotho blends the evil with the good;
She turns about all fortunes on her wheel;
None may abide. Such favouring deities
No one has ever found that he may trust
Tomorrow; on his flying wheel a god
Spins our swift-changing fortunes.

Orpheus' Song

WHAT Orpheus sang, Calliope's blest son,
When 'neath the heights of Thracian Rhodope
He struck his lute Pierian, is true:
Nothing abides. The rushing waterfall
Silenced its thunder at his music's sound,
The waters ceased their flow, forgot their haste,
And while the rivers thus delayed their course,
The far-off Thracian thought the Hebrus failed.
The woodland brought the winged kind, they came
Resting within the groves, or if a wing
That, roaming, flew through upper air the while,
Was wanting, when it heard the song it dropped.
Mount Athos tore away its crags and came,
Bearing the Centaurs as it moved along,
And stood by Rhodope, its snowy crown
Was melted by the song; the dryad fled
Her oak and hasted to the prophet's side;
The wild beasts at thy singing with their dens
Drew near; the Afric lion sat beside
The fearless flock, nor did the timid does
Tremble before the wolves; the serpent came
From gloomy den, its poisoned sting forgot.
 Nay more, he passed the gates of Taenarus
Among the silent phantoms, bearing there
His mournful lute, and with his doleful song
He overcame the melancholy gods
Of Erebus, nor feared the Stygian lake
By which the gods make oath; the restless wheel
Stood still, its languid whirling forced to cease;
The heart of Tityus began to grow
The while the vultures listened to the song;
Thou also heardst, O oarsman, and thy boat
Came oarless over the infernal stream;

Then first the aged Phrygian forgot
His raging thirst although the waves stood still,
Nor did he stretch a hand to reach the fruit.
When Orpheus seeking thus the lower world
Poured forth his singing and the restless stone
Was conquered, following the prophet's song,
The Goddesses restored the severed thread
Of fair Eurydice. But Orpheus looked
Behind, forgetful or not deeming true
Restored Eurydice was following him.
He lost the song's reward, she died again
Who hardly had been given back to life.
Then seeking comfort in his song, he sang
These words to Getan folk in mournful strains:
Unchanging laws are given by the gods,
And he who rules the seasons ordereth
Four fleeting changes for the changing year.
Dead Hercules compels us to believe
The Thracian Seer. The Parcae tie again
The thread of life for none, however much
He may desire; all that has been born
Or shall be dies. When to the world shall come
The time when law is not, the southern sky
Shall bury Libya, and on Afric's sands
Shall fallen lie; the northern sky o'erwhelm
Whatever lies beneath the poles, whate'er
Cold Boreas smites; pale Titan blot the day
From heaven; the royal palace of the sky
In its own ruin drag the rising sun
And setting; death and chaos overtake
The gods; death find at last within itself
Its end. What place will then receive the world?
Shall Tartarus spread wide her doors to take
The shattered heavens? Or is there space enough
Between the earth and heaven—perchance too much?
What place can hold such crime? A single place
Will hold the three realms—earth, and sea, and sky.

LUCAN

Caesar and Pompey

Lest newer glories triumphs past obscure,
Late conquered Gaul the bays from pirates won,
This, Magnus, was thy fear; thy roll of fame,
Of glorious deeds accomplished for the state
Allows no equal; nor will Caesar's pride
A prior rival in his triumphs brook;
Which had the right 'twere impious to enquire;
Each for his cause can vouch a judge supreme;
The victor, heaven: the vanquished, Cato, thee.
Nor were they like to like: the one in years
Now verging towards decay, in times of peace
Had unlearned war; but thirsting for applause
Had given the people much, and proud of fame
His former glory cared not to renew,
But joyed in plaudits of the theatre,
His gift to Rome: his triumphs in the past,
Himself the shadow of a mighty name.
As when some oak, in fruitful field sublime,
Adorned with venerable spoils, and gifts
Of bygone leaders, by its weight to earth
With feeble roots still clings; its naked arms
And hollow trunk, though leafless, give a shade;
And though condemned beneath the tempest's shock
To speedy fall, amid the sturdier trees
In sacred grandeur rules the forest still.
No such repute had Caesar won, nor fame;
But energy was his that could not rest—

The only shame he knew was not to win.
Keen and unvanquished, where revenge or hope
Might call, resistless would he strike the blow
With sword unpitying: every victory won
Reaped to the full; the favour of the gods
Pressed to the utmost; all that stayed his course
Aimed at the summit of power, was thrust aside:
Triumph his joy, though ruin marked his track.
As parts the clouds a bolt by winds compelled,
With crack of riven air and crash of worlds,
And veils the light of day, and on mankind,
Blasting their vision with its flames oblique,
Sheds deadly fright; then turning to its home,
Nought but the air opposing, through its path
Spreads havoc, and collects its scattered fires.

Civil War

SPAKE

Cato from inmost breast these sacred words:
"Chief in all wickedness is civil war,
Yet virtue in the paths marked out by fate
Treads on securely. Heaven's will be the crime
To have made even Cato guilty. Who has strength
To gaze unawed upon a toppling world?
When stars and sky fall headlong, and when earth
Slips from her base, who sits with folded hands?
Shall unknown nations, touched by western strife,
And monarchs born beneath another clime
Brave the dividing seas to join the war?
Shall Scythian tribes desert their distant north,
And Getae haste to view the fall of Rome,
And I look idly on? As some fond sire,
Reft of his sons, compelled by grief, himself
Marshals the long procession to the tomb,
Thrusts his own hand within the funeral flames,

Soothing his heart, and, as the lofty pyre
Rises on high, applies the kindled torch:
Nought, Rome, shall tear thee from me, till I hold
Thy form in death embraced; and Freedom's name,
Shade though it be, I'll follow to the grave.
Yea! let the cruel gods exact in full
Rome's expiation: of no drop of blood
The war be robbed. I would that, to the gods
Of heaven and hell devoted, this my life
Might satisfy their vengeance. Decius fell,
Crushed by the hostile ranks. When Cato falls
Let Rhine's fierce barbarous hordes and both the hosts
Thrust through my frame their darts! May I alone
Receive in death the wounds of all the war!
Thus may the people be redeemed, and thus
Rome for her guilt pay the atonement due.
Why should men die who wish to bear the yoke
And shrink not from the tyranny to come?
Strike me, and me alone, of laws and rights
In vain the guardian: this vicarious life
Shall give Hesperia peace and end her toils.
Who then will reign shall find no need for war.
You ask, Why follow Magnus? If he wins
He too will claim the Empire of the world.
Then let him, conquering with my service, learn
Not for himself to conquer." Thus he spoke
And stirred the blood that ran in Brutus' veins
Moving the youth to action in the war.

STATIUS

On Sleep

WHAT sin was mine, sweet, silent boy-god, Sleep,
Or what, poor sufferer, have I left undone,
That I should lack thy guerdon, I alone?
Quiet are the brawling streams: the shuddering deep
Sinks, and the rounded mountains feign to sleep.
The high seas slumber pillowed on Earth's breast;
All flocks and birds and beasts are stilled in rest,
But my sad eyes their nightly vigil keep.
O! if beneath the night some happier swain,
Entwined in loving arms, refuse thy boon
In wanton happiness,—come hither soon,
Come hither, Sleep. Let happier mortals gain
The full embrace of thy soft angel wing:
But touch me with thy wand, or hovering
Above mine eyelids sweep me with thy train.

JUVENAL

The City

GRIEVED though I am to see the man depart,
Who long has shared, and still must share, my heart,
Yet (when I call my better judgment home)
I praise his purpose; to retire from Rome,
And give, on Cumae's solitary coast,
The Sibyl—one inhabitant to boast!
 Full on the road to Baiae, Cumae lies,
And many a sweet retreat her shore supplies—
Though I prefer ev'n Prochyta's bare strand
To the Suburra:—for, what desert land,
What wild, uncultured spot, can more affright,
Than fires, wide blazing through the gloom of night,
Houses, with ceaseless ruin, thundering down,
And all the horrors of this hateful town?
Where poets, while the dog-star glows, rehearse,
To gasping multitudes, their barbarous verse!
 Now had my friend, impatient to depart,
Consigned his little all to one poor cart:
For this, without the town, he chose to wait;
But stopped a moment at the Conduit-gate.—
Here Numa erst his nightly visits paid,
And held high converse with the Egerian maid:
Now the once-hallowed fountain, grove, and fane,
Are let to Jews, a wretched, wandering train,
Whose furniture's a basket filled with hay,—
For every tree is forced a tax to pay;
And while the heaven-born Nine in exile rove,

The beggar rents their consecrated grove!
Thence slowly winding down the vale, we view
The Egerian grots—ah, how unlike the true!
Nymph of the Spring, more honoured hadst thou been,
If, free from art, an edge of living green,
Thy bubbling fount had circumscribed alone,
And marble ne'er profaned the native stone.
Umbritius here his sullen silence broke,
And turned on Rome, indignant, as he spoke.
Since virtue droops, he cried, without regard,
And honest toil scarce hopes a poor reward;
Since every morrow sees my means decay,
And still makes less the little of today;
I go, where Daedalus, as poets sing,
First checked his flight, and closed his weary wing:
While something yet of health and strength remains,
And yet no staff my faltering step sustains;
While few grey hairs upon my head are seen,
And my old age is vigorous still, and green.
Here, then, I bid my much-loved home farewell—
Ah, mine no more!—there let Arturius dwell,
And Catulus; knaves, who, in truth's despite,
Can white to black transform, and black to white,
Build temples, furnish funerals, auctions hold,
Farm rivers, ports, and scour the drains for gold!
Once they were trumpeters, and always found,
With strolling fencers, in their annual round,
While their puffed cheeks, which every village knew,
Called to "high feats of arms" the rustic crew:
Now they give shows themselves; and, at the will
Of the base rabble, raise the sign—to kill,
Ambitious of their voice: then turn, once more,
To their vile gains, and farm the common shore!
And why not every thing?—since Fortune throws
Her more peculiar smiles on such as those,
Whene'er, to wanton merriment inclined,
She lifts to thrones the dregs of human kind!

But why, my friend, should I at Rome remain?
I cannot teach my stubborn lips to feign;
Nor, when I hear a great man's verses, smile,
And beg a copy, if I think them vile.
A sublunary wight, I have no skill
To read the stars; I neither can, nor will,
Presage a father's death; I never pried,
In toads, for poison, nor—in aught beside.
Others may aid the adulterer's vile design,
And bear the insidious gift, and melting line,
Seduction's agents! I such deeds detest;
And, honest, let no thief partake my breast.
For this, without a friend, the world I quit,
A palsied limb, for every use unfit.
Who now is loved, but he whose conscious breast
Swells with dark deeds, still, still to be suppress?
He pays, he owes, thee nothing, (strictly just,)
Who gives an honest secret to thy trust;
But, a dishonest!—there, he feels thy power,
And buys thy friendship high from hour to hour.
But let not all the wealth which Tagus pours
In Ocean's lap, not all his glittering stores,
Be deemed a bribe, sufficient to requite
The loss of peace by day, of sleep by night:—
O take not, take not, what thy soul rejects,
Nor sell the faith, which he, who buys, suspects!
The nation, by the great, admired, caresst,
And hated, shunned by me, above the rest,
No longer, now, restrained by wounded pride,
I haste to show, (nor thou my warmth deride,)
I cannot rule my spleen, and calmly see,
A Grecian capital, in Italy!
Grecian? O, no! with this vast sewer compared,
The dregs of Greece are scarcely worth regard:
Long since, the stream that wanton Syria laves
Has disembogued its filth in Tiber's waves,
Its language, arts, o'erwhelmed us with the scum

Of Antioch's streets, its minstrel, harp, and drum.
Hie to the Circus! ye who pant to prove
A barbarous mistress, an outlandish love;
Hie to the Circus! there, in crowds they stand,
Tires on their head, and timbrels in their hand.
Thy rustic, Mars, the trechedipna wears,
And on his breast, smeared with ceroma, bears
A paltry prize, well-pleased; while every land,
Sicyon, and Amydos, and Alaband,
Tralles, and Samos, and a thousand more,
Thrive on his indolence, and daily pour
Their starving myriads forth: hither they come,
And batten on the genial soil of Rome;
Minions, then lords, of every princely dome!
A flattering, cringing, treacherous, artful race,
Of torrent tongue, and never-blushing face;
A Protean tribe, one knows not what to call,
Which shifts to every form, and shines in all:
Grammarian, painter, augur, rhetorician,
Rope-dancer, conjurer, fiddler, and physician,
All trades his own, your hungry Greekling counts;
And bid him mount the sky,—the sky he mounts!
You smile—was't a barbarian, then, that flew?
No, 'twas a Greek; 'twas an Athenian, too!
—Bear with their state who will: for I disdain
To feed their upstart pride, or swell their train:
Slaves, that in Syrian lighters stowed, so late,
With figs and prunes, (an inauspicious freight,)
Already see their faith preferred to mine,
And sit above me! and before me sign!—
That on the Aventine I first drew air,
And, from the womb, was nursed on Sabine fare,
Avails me not! our birthright now is lost,
And all our privilege, an empty boast!
For lo! where versed in every soothing art,
The wily Greek assails his patron's heart,
Finds in each dull harangue an air, a grace,

And all Adonis in a Gorgon face;
Admires the voice that grates upon the ear,
Like the shrill scream of amorous chanticleer;
And equals the crane neck, and narrow chest,
To Hercules, when, straining to his breast
The giant son of Earth, his every vein
Swells with the toil, and more than mortal pain.
We too can cringe as low, and praise as warm,
But flattery from the Greeks alone can charm.
See! they step forth, and figure to the life,
The naked nymph, the mistress, or the wife,
So just, you view the very woman there,
And fancy all beneath the girdle bare!
No longer now, the favourites of the stage
Boast their exclusive power to charm the age;
The happy art with them a nation shares,
Greece is a theatre, where all are players.
For lo! their patron smiles,—they burst with mirth;
He weeps,—they droop, the saddest souls on earth;
He calls for fire,—they court the mantle's heat;
'Tis warm, he cries,—and they dissolve in sweat.
Ill-matched!—secure of victory they start,
Who, taught from youth to play a borrowed part,
Can, with a glance, the rising passion trace,
And mould their own, to suit their patron's face;
At deeds of shame their hands admiring raise,
And mad debauchery's worst excesses praise.
Besides, no mound their raging lust restrains,
All ties it breaks, all sanctity profanes;
Wife, virgin-daughter, son unstained before,——
And, where these fail, they tempt the grandam hoar:
They notice every word, haunt every ear,
Your secrets learn, and fix you theirs from fear.
Turn to their schools:—yon grey professor see,
Smeared with the sanguine stains of perfidy!
That tutor most accursed his pupil sold!
That Stoic sacrificed his friend to gold!

A true-born Grecian! littered on the coast,
Where the Gorgonian hack a pinion lost.
Hence, Romans, hence! no place for you remains,
Where Diphilus, where Erimanthus reigns;
Miscreants, who, faithful to their native art,
Admit no rival in a patron's heart:—
For let them fasten on his easy ear,
And drop one hint, one secret slander there,
Sucked from their country's venom, or their own,
That instant they possess the man alone;
While we are spurned, contemptuous, from the door,
Our long, long slavery thought upon no more.
'Tis but a client lost!—and that, we find,
Sits wondrous lightly on a patron's mind:
And (not to flatter our poor pride, my friend)
What merit with the great can we pretend,
Though, in our duty, we prevent the day,
And, darkling, run our humble court to pay;
When the brisk praetor, long before, is gone,
And hastening, with stern voice, his lictors on,
Lest his colleagues o'erpass him in the street,
And first the rich and childless matrons greet,
Alba and Modia, who impatient wait,
And think the morning homage comes too late!
Here freeborn youths wait the rich servant's call,
And, if they walk beside him, yield the wall;
And wherefore? this, forsooth, can fling away,
On one voluptuous night, a legion's pay,
While those, when some Calvina, sweeping by,
Inflames the fancy, check their roving eye,
And frugal of their scanty means, forbear,
To tempt the wanton from her splendid chair.
Produce, at Rome, your witness: let him boast,
The sanctity of Berecynthia's host,
Of Numa, or of him, whose zeal divine
Snatched pale Minerva from her blazing shrine:
To search his rent-roll, first the bench prepares,

His honesty employs their latest cares:
What table does he keep, what slaves maintain,
And what, they ask, and where, is his domain?
These weighty matters known, his faith they rate,
And square his probity to his estate.
The poor may swear by all the immortal Powers,
By the Great Gods of Samothrace, and ours,
His oaths are false, they cry; he scoffs at heaven,
And all its thunders; scoffs,—and is forgiven!
Add, that the wretch is still the theme of scorn,
If the soiled cloak be patched, the gown o'erworn;
If, through the bursting shoe, the foot be seen,
Or the coarse seam tell where the rent has been.
O Poverty, thy thousand ills combined
Sink not so deep into the generous mind,
As the contempt and laughter of mankind!
"Up! up! these cushioned benches," Lectius cries,
"Befit not your estates: for shame! arise."
For "shame!"—but you say well: the pander's heir,
The spawn of bulks and stews, is seated there;
The cryer's spruce son, fresh from the fencer's school,
And prompt the taste to settle and to rule.—
So Otho fixed it, whose preposterous pride
First dared to chase us from their Honours' side.
In these cursed walls, devote alone to gain,
When do the poor a wealthy wife obtain?
When are they named in Wills? when called to share
The Aedile's council, and assist the chair?—
Long since should they have risen, thus slighted, spurned,
And left their home, but—not to have returned!
Depressed by indigence, the good and wise,
In every clime, by painful efforts rise;
Here, by more painful still, where scanty cheer,
Poor lodging, mean attendance,—all is dear.
In earthen ware he scorns, at Rome, to eat,
Who, called abruptly to the Marsian's seat,
From such, well pleased, would take his simple food,

Nor blush to wear the cheap Venetian hood.
There's many a part of Italy, 'tis said,
Where none assume the toga but the dead:
There, when the toil foregone and annual play,
Mark, from the rest, some high and solemn day,
To theatres of turf the rustics throng,
Charmed with the farce that charmed their sires so long
While the pale infant, of the mask in dread,
Hides, in his mother's breast, his little head.
No modes of dress high birth distinguish there;
All ranks, all orders, the same habit wear,
And the dread Aedile's dignity is known,
O sacred badge! by his white vest alone.
But here, beyond our power arrayed we go,
In all the gay varieties of show;
And when our purse supplies the charge no more,
Borrow, unblushing, from our neighbour's store:
Such is the reigning vice; and so we flaunt,
Proud in distress, and prodigal in want!
Briefly, my friend, here all are slaves to gold,
And words, and smiles, and every thing is sold.
What will you give for Cossus' nod? how high
The silent notice of Veiento buy?
—One favourite youth is shaved, another shorn;
And, while to Jove the precious spoil is borne,
Clients are taxed for offerings, and, (yet more
To gall their patience,) from their little store,
Constrained to swell the minion's ample hoard,
And bribe the page, for leave to bribe his lord.
Who fears the crash of houses in retreat?
At simple Gabii, bleak Praeneste's seat,
Volsinium's craggy heights, embowered in wood,
Or Tibur, beetling o'er prone Anio's flood?
While half the city here by shores is staid,
And feeble cramps, that lend a treacherous aid:
For thus the stewards patch the riven wall,
Thus prop the mansion, tottering to its fall;

Then bid the tenant court secure repose,
While the pile nods to every blast that blows.
O! may I live where no such fears molest,
No midnight fires burst on my hour of rest!
For here 'tis terror all; midst the loud cry
Of "water! water!" the scared neighbours fly,
With all their haste can seize—the flames aspire,
And the third floor is wrapt in smoke and fire,
While you, unconscious, doze: Up, ho! and know,
The impetuous blaze which spreads dismay below,
By swift degrees will reach the aerial cell,
Where, crouching, underneath the tiles you dwell,
Where your tame doves their golden couplets rear,
"And you could no mischance, but drowning, fear!"
"Codrus had but one bed, and that too short
For his short wife;" his goods, of every sort,
Were else but few:—six little pipkins graced
His cupboard head, a little can was placed
On a snug shelf beneath, and near it lay
A Chiron, of the same cheap marble,—clay.
And was this all? O no: he yet possest
A few Greek books, shrined in an ancient chest,
Where barbarous mice through many an inlet crept,
And fed on heavenly numbers, while he slept.—
"Codrus, in short, had nothing." You say true;
And yet poor Codrus lost that nothing too!
One curse alone was wanting. to complete
His woes: that, cold and hungry, through the street,
The wretch should beg, and, in the hour of need,
Find none to lodge, to clothe him, or to feed!
But should the raging flames on grandeur prey,
And low in dust Asturius' palace lay,
The squalid matron sighs, the senate mourns,
The pleaders cease, the judge the court adjourns;
All join to wail the city's hapless fate,
And rail at fire with more than common hate.
Lo! while it burns, the obsequious courtiers haste,

With rich materials, to repair the waste:
This, brings him marble, that, a finished piece,
The far-famed boast of Polyclete and Greece;
This, ornaments, which graced of old the fane
Of Asia's gods; that, figured plate and plain;
This, cases, books, and busts the shelves to grace,
And piles of coin his specie to replace—
So much the childless Persian swells his store,
(Though deemed the richest of the rich before,)
That all ascribe the flames to thirst of pelf,
And swear, Asturius fired his house himself.

O, had you, from the Circus, power to fly,
In many a halcyon village might you buy
Some elegant retreat, for what will, here,
Scarce hire a gloomy dungeon through the year!
There wells, by nature formed, which need no rope,
No labouring arm, to crane their waters up,
Around your lawn their facile streams shall shower,
And cheer the springing plant and opening flower.
There live, delighted with the rustic's lot,
And till, with your own hands, the little spot;
The little spot shall yield you large amends,
And glad, with many a feast, your Samian friends.
And, sure,—in any corner we can get,
To call one lizard ours, is something yet!

Flushed with a mass of indigested food,
Which clogs the stomach and inflames the blood,
What crowds, with watching wearied and o'erprest,
Curse the slow hours, and die for want of rest!
For who can hope his languid lids to close,
Where brawling taverns banish all repose?
Sleep, to the rich alone, "his visits pays:"
And hence the seeds of many a dire disease.
The carts loud rumbling through the narrow way,
The drivers' clamours at each casual stay,
From drowsy Drusus would his slumber take,
And keep the calves of Proteus broad awake!

If business call, obsequious crowds divide,
While o'er their heads the rich securely ride,
By tall Illyrians borne, and read, or write,
Or, (should the early hour to rest invite,)
Close the soft litter, and enjoy the night.
Yet reach they first the goal; while, by the throng
Elbowed and jostled, scarce we creep along;
Sharp strokes from poles, tubs, rafters, doomed to feel;
And plastered o'er with mud, from head to heel.
While the rude soldier gores us as he goes,
Or marks, in blood, his progress on our toes!
See, from the Dole, a vast tumultuous throng,
Each followed by his kitchen, pours along!
Huge pans, which Corbulo could scarce uprear,
With steady neck a puny slave must bear,
And, lest amid the way the flames expire,
Glide nimbly on, and gliding, fan the fire;
Through the close press with sinuous efforts wind,
And, piece by piece, leave his botched rags behind.
Hark! groaning on, the unwieldy waggon spreads
Its cumbrous load, tremendous! o'er our heads,
Projecting elm or pine, that nods on high,
And threatens death to every passer by.
Heavens! should the axle crack, which bears a weight
Of huge Ligurian stone, and pour the freight
On the pale crowd beneath, what would remain
What joint, what bone, what atom of the slain?
The body, with the soul, would vanish quite,
Invisible as air, to mortal sight!—
Meanwhile, unconscious of their fellow's fate,
At home, they heat the water, scour the plate,
Arrange the strigils, fill the cruse with oil,
And ply their several tasks with fruitless toil:
For he who bore the dole, poor mangled ghost,
Sits pale and trembling on the Stygian coast,
Scared at the horrors of the novel scene,
At Charon's threatening voice, and scowling mien;

Nor hopes a passage, thus abruptly hurled,
Without his farthing, to the nether world.
Pass we these fearful dangers, and survey
What other evils threat our nightly way.
And first, behold the mansion's towering size,
Where floors on floors to the tenth story rise;
Whence heedless garretteers their potsherds throw,
And crush the unwary wretch that walks below!
Clattering the storm descends from heights unknown,
Ploughs up the street, and wounds the flinty stone!
'Tis madness, dire improvidence of ill,
To sup abroad, before you sign your Will;
Since fate in ambush lies, and marks his prey,
From every wakeful window in the way:
Pray, then,—and count your humble prayer well sped,
If pots be only—emptied on your head.
The drunken bully, ere his man be slain,
Frets through the night, and courts repose in vain;
And while the thirst of blood his bosom burns,
From side to side, in restless anguish, turns,
Like Peleus' son, when, quelled by Hector's hand,
His loved Patroclus prest the Phrygian strand.
There are, who murder as an opiate take,
And only when no brawls await them wake:
Yet even these heroes, flushed with youth and wine,
All contest with the purple robe decline;
Securely give the lengthened train to pass,
The sun-bright flambeaux, and the lamps of brass.—
Me, whom the moon, or candle's paler gleam,
Whose wick I husband to the last extreme,
Guides through the gloom, he braves, devoid of fear:
The prelude to our doughty quarrel hear,
If that be deemed a quarrel, where, heaven knows,
He only gives, and I receive, the blows!
Across my path he strides, and bids me stand.
I bow, obsequious to the dread command;
What else remains, where madness, rage, combine

With youth, and strength superior far to mine?
"Whence come you, rogue?" he cries; "whose beans
to-night
Have stuffed you thus? what cobbler clubbed his mite,
For leeks and sheep's-head porridge? Dumb! quite dumb!
Speak, or be kicked.—Yet, once again! your home?
Where shall I find you? At what beggar's stand
(Temple, or bridge) whimp'ring with out-stretched hand?"
Whether I strive some humble plea to frame,
Or steal in silence by, 'tis just the same;
I'm beaten first, then dragged in rage away;
Bound to the peace, or punished for the fray!
Mark here the boasted freedom of the poor!
Beaten and bruised, that goodness to adore,
Which, at their humble prayer, suspends its ire,
And sends them home, with yet a bone entire!
Nor this the worst; for when deep midnight reigns,
And bolts secure our doors, and massy chains,
When noisy inns a transient silence keep,
And harassed nature woos the balm of sleep,
Then, thieves and murderers ply their dreadful trade;
With stealthy steps our secret couch invade:—
Roused from the treacherous calm, aghast we start,
And the fleshed sword—is buried in our heart!
Hither from bogs, from rocks, and caves pursued,
(The Pontine marsh, and Gallinarian wood,)
The dark assassins flock, as to their home,
And fill with dire alarms the streets of Rome.
Such countless multitudes our peace annoy,
That bolts and shackles every forge employ,
And cause so wide a waste, the country fears
A want of ore for mattocks, rakes, and shares.
O! happy were our sires, estranged from crimes;
And happy, happy, were the good old times,
Which saw, beneath their kings', their tribunes' reign,
One cell the nation's criminals contain!
Much could I add, more reasons could I cite,

If time were ours, to justify my flight;
But see! the impatient team is moving on,
The sun declining; and I must be gone:
Long since, the driver murmured at my stay,
And jerked his whip, to beckon me away.
Farewell, my friend! with this embrace we part:
Cherish my memory ever in your heart;
And when, from crowds and business, you repair,
To breathe at your Aquinum freer air,
Fail not to draw me from my loved retreat,
To Elvine Ceres, and Diana's seat:—
For your bleak hills my Cumae I'll resign,
And (if you blush not at such aid as mine)
Come well equipped, to wage, in angry rhymes,
Fierce war, with you, on follies and on crimes.

The Women

YES, I believe that Chastity was known,
And prized on earth, while Saturn filled the throne;
When rocks a bleak and scanty shelter gave,
When sheep and shepherds thronged one common cave,
And when the mountain wife her couch bestrewed
With skins of beasts, joint tenants of the wood,
And reeds, and leaves plucked from the neighbouring tree:—
A woman, Cynthia, far unlike to thee,
Or thee, weak child of fondness and of fears,
Whose eyes a sparrow's death suffused with tears:
But strong, and reaching to her burly brood
Her big-swollen breasts, replete with wholesome food,
And rougher than her husband, gorged with mast,
And frequent belching from the coarse repast.
For when the world was new, the race that broke,
Unfathered, from the soil or opening oak,
Lived most unlike the men of later times,
The puling brood of follies and of crimes.

Haply some trace of Chastity remained,
While Jove, but Jove as yet unbearded, reigned:
Before the Greek bound, by another's head,
His doubtful faith; or men, of theft in dread,
Had learned their herbs and fruitage to immure,
But all was unenclosed, and all secure!
At length Astrea, from these confines driven,
Regained by slow degrees her native heaven
With her retired her sister in disgust,
And left the world to rapine, and to lust.
'Tis not a practice, friend, of recent date,
But old, established, and inveterate,
To climb another's couch, and boldly slight
The sacred Genius of the nuptial rite:
All other crimes the Age of Iron curst;
But that of Silver saw adulterers first.
Yet thou, it seems, art eager to engage
Thy witless neck, in this degenerate age!
Even now, thy hair the modish curl is taught,
By master-hands; even now, the ring is bought;
Even now—thou once, Ursidius, hadst thy wits,
But thus to talk of wiving!—O, these fits!
What snakes, what Furies, agitate thy breast?
Heavens! wilt thou tamely drag the galling chain,
While hemp is to be bought, while knives remain?
While windows woo thee so divinely high,
And Tiber and the Aemilian bridge are nigh?—
"O, but the law," thou criest, "the Julian law,
Will keep my destined wife from every flaw;
Besides, I die for heirs." Good! and for those,
Wilt thou the turtle and the turbot lose,
And all the dainties, which the flatterer, still
Heaps on the childless, to secure his will?
But what will hence impossible be held,
If thou, old friend, to wedlock art impelled?
If thou, the veriest debauchee in town,
With whom wives, widows, every thing went down,

Shouldst stretch the unsuspecting neck, and poke
Thy foolish nose into the marriage yoke?
Thou, famed for scapes, and, by the trembling wife,
Thrust in a chest so oft, to save thy life!—
But what! Ursidius hopes a mate to gain,
Frugal, and chaste, and of the good old strain:
Alas, he's frantic! ope a vein with speed,
And bleed him copiously, good doctor, bleed.
Jewel of men! thy knees to Jove incline,
And let a heifer fall at Juno's shrine,
If thy researches for a wife be blest,
With one, who is not——need I speak the rest?
Ah! few the matrons Ceres now can find,
Her hallowed fillets, with chaste hands, to bind;
Few whom their fathers with their lips can trust,
So strong their filial kisses smack of lust!
Go then, prepare to bring your mistress home,
And crown your doors with garlands, ere she come,—
But will one man suffice, methinks, you cry,
For all her wants and wishes? Will one eye!
And yet there runs, 'tis said, a wondrous tale,
Of some pure maid, who lives—in some lone vale.
There she may live, but let the phoenix, placed
At Gabii or Fidenae, prove as chaste
As at her father's farm!—Yet who will swear,
That nought is done in night and silence there?
Time was, when Jupiter and Mars, we're told,
With many a nymph in woods and caves made bold;
And still, perhaps, they may not be too old.
Survey our public places; see you there
One woman worthy of your serious care?
See you, through all the crowded benches, one
Whom you might take securely for your own?—
Lo! while Bathyllus, with his flexile limbs,
Acts Leda, and through every posture swims,
Tuccia delights to realize the play,
And in lascivious trances melts away;

While rustic Thymelé, with curious eye,
Marks the quick pant, the lingering, deep-drawn sigh,
And while her cheeks with burning blushes glow,
Learns this—learns all the city matrons know.
 Others, when of the theatres bereft,
When nothing but the wrangling bar is left,
In the long tedious months which interpose
'Twixt the Cybelian and Plebeian shows,
Sicken for action, and assume the airs,
The mask and thyrsus, of their favourite players.
—Midst peals of mirth, see Urbicus advance,
(Poor Aelia's choice,) And, in a wanton dance,
Burlesque Autonoë's woes! the rich engage
In higher frolics, and defraud the stage;
Take from Chrysogonus the power to sing,
Loose, at vast prices, the comedian's ring,
Tempt the tragedian—but I see you moved—
Heavens! dreamed you that Quintilian would be loved!
 Then hie thee, Lentulus, and boldly wed,
That the chaste partner of thy fruitful bed
May kindly single from this motley race
Some sturdy Glaphyrus, thy brows to grace:
Haste; in the narrow streets long scaffolds raise,
And deck thy portals with triumphant bays;
That, in thy heir, as swathed in state he lies,
The guests may trace Mirmillo's nose and eyes!
 Hippia, who shared a rich patrician's bed,
To Egypt with a gladiator fled,
While rank Canopus eyed, with strong disgust,
This ranker specimen of Roman lust.
Without one pang, the profligate resigned
Her husband, sister, sire; gave to the wind
Her children's tears; yea, tore herself away,
(To strike you more,)—from Paris and the play!
And though, in affluence born, her infant head
Had pressed the down of an embroidered bed,
She braved the deep, (she long had braved her fame;

But this is little—to the courtly dame,)
And, with undaunted breast, the changes bore
Of many a sea, the swelling and the roar.
Have they an honest call, such ills to bear?
Cold shiverings seize them, and they shrink with fear;
But set illicit pleasure in their eye,
Onward they rush, and every toil defy!
Summoned by duty, to attend her lord,
How, cries the lady, can I get on board?
How bear the dizzy motion? how the smell?
But—when the adulterer calls her, all is well!
She roams the deck, with pleasure ever new,
Tugs at the ropes, and messes with the crew;
But with her husband—O, how changed the case!
Sick! sick! she cries, and vomits in his face.
But by what youthful charms, what shape, what air,
Was Hippia won, the opprobrious name to bear
Of fencer's trull? The wanton well might dote!
For the sweet Sergius long had scraped his throat,
Long looked for leave to quit the public stage,
Maimed in his limbs, and verging now to age.
Add, that his face was battered and decayed;
The helmet on his brow huge galls had made,
A wen deformed his nose, of monstrous size,
And sharp rheum trickled from his bloodshot eyes:
But then he was a swordsman! that alone
Made every charm and every grace his own;
That made him dearer than her nuptial vows,
Dearer than country, sister, children, spouse.—
'Tis blood they love· Let Sergius quit the sword,
And he'll appear, at once,—so like her lord!
Start you at wrongs that touch a private name,
At Hippia's lewdness, and Veiento's shame?
Turn to the rivals of the immortal Powers,
And mark how like their fortunes are to ours!
Claudius had scarce begun his eyes to close,
Ere from his pillow Messalina rose;

(Accustomed long the bed of state to slight
For the coarse mattress, and the hood of night;)
And with one maid, and her dark hair concealed
Beneath a yellow tire, a strumpet veiled!
She slipt into the stews, unseen, unknown,
And hired a cell, yet reeking, for her own.
There, flinging off her dress, the imperial whore
Stood, with bare breasts and gilded, at the door,
And showed, Britannicus, to all who came,
The womb that bore thee, in Lycisca's name!
Allured the passers by with many a wile,
And asked her price, and took it, with a smile.
And when the hour of business now was spent,
And all the trulls dismissed, repining went;
Yet what she could, she did; slowly she past,
And saw her man, and shut her cell, the last,
—Still raging with the fever of desire,
Her veins all turgid, and her blood all fire,
With joyless pace, the imperial couch she sought,
And to her happy spouse (yet slumbering) brought
Cheeks rank with sweat, limbs drenched with poisonous dews,
The steam of lamps, and odour of the stews!
'Twere long to tell what philters they provide,
What drugs, to set a son-in-law aside.
Women, in judgment weak, in feeling strong,
By every gust of passion borne along,
Act, in their fits, such crimes, that, to be just,
The least pernicious of their sins is lust.
But why's Cesennia then, you say, adored,
And styled the first of women, by her lord?
Because she brought him thousands: such the price
It cost the lady to be free from vice!—
Not for her charms the wounded lover pined,
Nor felt the flame which fires the ardent mind,
Plutus, not Cupid, touched his sordid heart;
And 'twas her dower that winged the unerring dart.

She brought enough her liberty to buy,
And tip the wink before her husband's eye.
A wealthy wanton, to a miser wed,
Has all the license of a widowed bed.
But yet, Sertorius what I say disproves,
For though his Bibula is poor, he loves.
True! but examine him; and, on my life,
You'll find he loves the beauty, not the wife.
Let but a wrinkle on her forehead rise,
And time obscure the lustre of her eyes;
Let but the moisture leave her flaccid skin,
And her teeth blacken, and her cheeks grow thin;
And you shall hear the insulting freedman say,
"Pack up your trumpery, madam, and away!
Nay, bustle, bustle; here you give offence,
With snivelling night and day;—take your nose hence!'
But, ere that hour arrive, she reigns indeed!
Shepherds, and sheep of Canusinian breed,
Falernian vineyards, (trifles these,) she craves,
And store of boys, and troops of country slaves;
Briefly, for all her neighbour has, she sighs,
And plagues her doting husband, till he buys.
In winter, when the merchant fears to roam,
And snow confines the shivering crew at home;
She ransacks every shop for precious ware,
Here cheapens myrrh and crystal vases; there,
That far-famed gem which Berenice wore,
The hire of incest, and thence valued more;
A brother's present, in that barbarous state,
Where kings the sabbath, barefoot, celebrate;
And old indulgence grants a length of life
To hogs, that fatten fearless of the knife.
What! and is none of all this numerous herd
Worthy your choice? not one, to be preferred?
Suppose her nobly born, young, rich, and fair,
And (though a coal-black swan be far less rare)
Chaste as the Sabine wives, who rushed between

The kindred hosts, and closed the unnatural scene;
Yet who could bear to lead an humbled life,
Cursed with that veriest plague, a faultless wife!—
Some simple rustic at Venusium bred,
O let me, rather than Cornelia, wed,
If, to great virtues, greater pride she join,
And count her ancestors as current coin.
Take back, for mercy's sake, thy Hannibal!
Away with vanquished Syphax, camp and all!
Troop, with the whole of Carthage! I'd be free
From all this pageantry of worth—and thee.
"O let, Apollo, let my children live,
And thou, Diana, pity, and forgive;"
Amphion cries; "they, they are guiltless all:
The mother sinned, let then the mother fall."
In vain he cries; Apollo bends his bow,
And, with the children, lays the father low.
They fell; while Niobe aspired to place
Her birth and blood above Latona's race;
And boast her womb,—too fruitful, to be named
With that white sow, for thirty sucklings famed.
Beauty and worth are purchased much too dear,
If a wife force them hourly on your ear;
For, say, what pleasure can you hope to find,
Even in this boast, this phoenix of her kind,
If, warped by pride, on all around she lour,
And in your cup more gall than honey pour?
Ah! who so blindly wedded to the state,
As not to shrink from such a perfect mate,
Of every virtue feel the oppressive weight,
And curse the worth he loves, seven hours in eight?
Some faults, though small, no husband yet can bear:
'Tis now the nauseous cant, that none is fair,
Unless her thoughts in Attic terms she dress;
A mere Cecropian of a Sulmoness!
All now is Greek: in Greek their souls they pour,
In Greek their fears, hopes, joys;—what would you more?

In Greek they clasp their lovers. We allow
These fooleries to girls: but thou, O thou,
Who tremblest on the verge of eighty-eight,
To Greek it still!—'tis, now, a day too late.
Foh! how it savours of the dregs of lust,
When an old hag, whose blandishments disgust,
Affects the infant lisp, the girlish squeak,
And mumbles out, "My life! My soul!" in Greek!
Words, which the secret sheets alone should hear,
But which she trumpets in the public ear.
And words, indeed, have power—But though she woo
In softer strains than e'er Carpophorus knew,
Her wrinkles still employ her favourite's cares;
And while she murmurs love, he counts her years!
But tell me;—if thou canst not love a wife,
Made thine by every tie, and thine for life,
Why wed at all? why waste the wine and cakes,
The queasy-stomached guest, at parting, takes?
And the rich present, which the bridal right
Claims for the favours of the happy night?
The charger, where, triumphantly inscrolled,
The Dacian hero shines in current gold!
If thou canst love, and thy besotted mind
Is, so uxoriously, to one inclined,
Then bow thy neck, and with submissive air
Receive the yoke—thou must for ever wear.
To a fond spouse a wife no mercy shows:—
Though warmed with equal fires, she mocks his woes,
And triumphs in his spoils: her wayward will
Defeats his bliss, and turns his good to ill!
Nought must be given, if she opposes; nought,
If she opposes, must be sold or bought;
She tells him where to love, and where to hate,
Shuts out the ancient friend, whose beard his gate
Knew, from its downy to its hoary state:
And when pimps, parasites, of all degrees,
Have power to will their fortunes as they please,

She dictates his; and impudently dares
To name his very rivals for his heirs!
"Go, crucify that slave." For what offence?
Who the accuser? Where the evidence?
For when the life of man is in debate,
No time can be too long, no care too great;
Hear all, weigh all with caution, I advise—
"Thou sniveller! is a slave a man?" she cries.
"He's innocent! be 't so:—'tis my command,
My will; let that, sir, for a reason stand."
Thus the virago triumphs, thus she reigns:
Anon she sickens of her first domains,
And seeks for new; husband on husband takes,
Till of her bridal veil one rent she makes.
Again she tires, again for change she burns,
And to the bed she lately left returns,
While the fresh garlands, and unfaded boughs,
Yet deck the portal of her wondering spouse.
Thus swells the list; eight husbands in five years:
A rare inscription for their sepulchres!
While your wife's mother lives, expect no peace.
She teaches her, with savage joy, to fleece
A bankrupt spouse: kind creature! she befriends
The lover's hopes, and, when her daughter sends
An answer to his prayer, the style inspects,
Softens the cruel, and the wrong corrects:
Experienced bawd! she blinds, or bribes all eyes,
And brings the adulterer, in despite of spies.
And now the farce begins; the lady falls
"Sick, sick, oh! sick;" and for the doctor calls:
Sweltering she lies till the dull visit's o'er,
While the rank lecher, at the closet door
Lurking in silence, maddens with delay,
And in his own impatience melts away.
Nor count it strange: What mother e'er was known
To teach severer morals than her own?—
No;—with their daughters' lusts they swell their stores,

And thrive as bawds, when out of date as whores!
Women support the bar: they love the law,
And raise litigious questions for a straw;
They meet in private, and prepare the bill,
Draw up the instructions with a lawyer's skill,
Suggest to Celsus where the merits lie,
And dictate points for statement or reply.
Nay more, they fence! who has not marked their oil,
Their purple rugs, for this preposterous toil?
Room for the lady—lo! she seeks the list,
And fiercely tilts at her antagonist,
A post! which, with her buckler, she provokes,
And bores and batters with repeated strokes;
Till all the fencer's art can do she shows,
And the glad master interrupts her blows.
O worthy, sure, to head those wanton dames,
Who foot it naked at the Floral games;
Unless, with nobler daring, she aspire,
And tempt the arena's bloody field—for hire!
What sense of shame is to that female known,
Who envies our pursuits, and hates her own?
Yet would she not, though proud in arms to shine,
(True woman still,) her sex for ours resign;
For there's a thing she loves beyond compare,
And we, alas! have no advantage there.—
Heavens! with what glee a husband must behold
His wife's accoutrements, in public, sold;
And auctioneers displaying to the throng
Her crest, her belt, her gauntlet, and her thong!
Or, if in wilder frolics she engage,
And take her private lessons for the stage,
Then three-fold rapture must expand his breast,
To see her greaves "a-going," with the rest.
Yet these are they, the tender souls! who sweat
In muslin, and in silk expire with heat.—
Mark, with what force, as the full blow descends,
She thunders "hah!" again, how low she bends

Beneath the opposer's stroke; how firms she rests,
Poised on her hams, and every step contests:
How close tucked up for fight, behind, before,
Then laugh—to see her squat, when all is o'er!
Daughters of Lepidus, and Gurges old,
And blind Metellus, did ye e'er behold
Asylla (though a fencer's trull confest)
Tilt at a stake, thus impudently drest!
'Tis night; yet hope no slumbers with your wife;
The nuptial bed is still the scene of strife:
There lives the keen debate, the clamorous brawl,
And quiet "never comes, that comes to all."
Fierce as a tigress plundered of her young,
Rage fires her breast, and loosens all her tongue,
When, conscious of her guilt, she feigns to groan,
And chides your loose amours, to hide her own;
Storms at the scandal of your baser flames,
And weeps her injuries from imagined names,
With tears that, marshalled, at their station stand,
And flow impassioned, as she gives command.
You think those showers her true affection prove,
And deem yourself—so happy in her love!
With fond caresses strive her heart to cheer,
And from her eyelids suck the starting tear:
—But could you now examine the scrutore
Of this most loving, this most jealous whore,
What amorous lays, what letters would you see,
Proofs, damning proofs, of her sincerity!
But these are doubtful—Put a clearer case:
Suppose her taken in a loose embrace,
A slave's or knight's. Now, my Quintilian, come,
And fashion an excuse. What! you are dumb?
Then, let the lady speak. "Was't not agreed
The man might please himself?" It was; proceed.
"Then, so may I"—O, Jupiter! "No oath:
Man is a general term, and takes in both."
When once surprised, the sex all shame forego;

And more audacious, as more guilty, grow.
Whence shall these prodigies of vice be traced?
From wealth, my friend. Our matrons then were chaste,
When days of labour, nights of short repose,
Hands still employed the Tuscan wool to tose,
Their husbands armed, and anxious for the State,
And Carthage hovering near the Colline gate,
Conspired to keep all thoughts of ill aloof,
And banished vice far from their lowly roof.
Now, all the evils of long peace are ours;
Luxury, more terrible than hostile powers,
Her baleful influence wide around has hurled,
And well avenged the subjugated world!
—Since Poverty, our better Genius, fled,
Vice, like a deluge, o'er the State has spread.
Now, shame to Rome! in every street are found
The essenced Sybarite, with roses crowned,
The gay Miletan, and the Tarentine,
Lewd, petulant, and reeling ripe with wine!
Wealth first, the ready pander to all sin,
Brought foreign manners, foreign vices in;
Enervate wealth, and with seductive art,
Sapped every homebred virtue of the heart;
Yes, every:—for what cares the drunken dame,
(Take head or tail, to her 'tis just the same,)
Who, at deep midnight, on fat oysters sups,
And froths with unguents her Falernian cups;
Who swallows oceans, till the tables rise,
And double lustres dance before her eyes!
Thus flushed, conceive, as Tullia homeward goes,
With what contempt she tosses up her nose
At Chastity's hoar fane! what impious jeers
Collatia pours in Maura's tingling ears!
Here stop their litters, here they all alight,
And squat together in the goddess' sight·—
You pass, aroused at dawn your court to pay,
The loathsome scene of their licentious play.

Who knows not now, my friend, the secret rites
Of the Good Goddess; when the dance excites
The boiling blood; when, to distraction wound,
By wine, and music's stimulating sound,
The maenads of Priapus, with wild air,
Howl horrible, and toss their flowing hair!
Then, how the wine at every pore o'erflows!
How the eye sparkles! how the bosom glows!
How the cheek burns,! and, as the passions rise,
How the strong feeling bursts in eager cries!—
Saufeia now springs forth, and tries a fall
With the town prostitutes, and throws them all;
But yields, herself, to Medullina, known
For parts, and powers, superior to her own.
Maids, mistresses, alike the contest share,
And 'tis not always birth that triumphs there.
Nothing is feigned in this accursed game:
'Tis genuine all; and such as would inflame
The frozen age of Priam, and inspire
The ruptured, bedrid Nestor with desire.
Stung with their mimic feats, a hollow groan
Of lust breaks forth; the sex, the sex is shown!
And one loud yell re-echoes through the den,
"Now, now, 'tis lawful! now admit the men!"
There's none arrived. "Not yet! then scour the street,
And bring us quickly, here, the first you meet."
There's none abroad. "Then fetch our slaves." They're gone.
"Then hire a waterman." There's none. "Not one!"—
Nature's strong barrier scarcely now restrains
The baffled fury in their boiling veins!
And would to heaven our ancient rites were free!—
But Africa and India, earth and sea,
Have heard, what singing-wench produced his ware,
Vast as two Anti-Catos, there, even there,
Where the he-mouse, in reverence, lies concealed,
And every picture of a male is veiled.
And who was then a scoffer? who despised

The simple rites by infant Rome devised,
The wooden bowl of pious Numa's day,
The coarse brown dish, and pot of homely clay?
Now, woe the while! religion's in its wane;
And daring Clodii swarm in every fane.
I hear, old friends, I hear you: "Make all sure:
Let spies surround her, and let bolts secure."
But who shall keep the keepers? Wives contemn
Our poor precautions, and begin with them.
Lust is the master passion; it inflames,
Alike, both high and low; alike, the dames,
Who, on tall Syrians' necks, their pomp display,
And those who pick, on foot, their miry way.
Whene'er Ogulnia to the Circus goes,
To emulate the rich, she hires her clothes,
Hires followers, friends, and cushions; hires a chair,
A nurse, and a trim girl, with golden hair,
To slip her billets:—prodigal and poor,
She wastes the wreck of her paternal store
On smooth-faced wrestlers; wastes her little all,
And strips her shivering mansion to the wall!
There's many a woman knows distress at home;
Not one who feels it, and, ere ruin come,
To her small means conforms. Taught by the ant,
Men sometimes guard against the extreme of want,
And stretch, though late, their providential fears,
To food and raiment for their future years:
But women never see their wealth decay;
With lavish hands they scatter night and day,
As if the gold, with vegetative power,
Would spring afresh, and bloom from hour to hour;
As if the mass its present size would keep,
And no expense reduce the eternal heap.
Others there are, who centre all their bliss
In the soft eunuch, and the beardless kiss:
They need not from his chin avert their face,
Nor use abortive drugs, for his embrace.

But oh! their joys run high, if he be formed,
When his full veins the fire of love has warmed;
When every part's to full perfection reared,
And nought of manhood wanting, but the beard.
But should the dame in music take delight,
The public singer is disabled quite:
In vain the praetor guards him all he can;
She slips the buckle, and enjoys her man.
Still in her hand his instrument is found,
Thick set with gems, that shed a lustre round;
Still o'er his lyre the ivory quill she flings,
Still runs divisions on the trembling strings,
The trembling strings, which the loved Hedymel
Was wont to strike—so sweetly, and so well!
These still she holds, with these she soothes her woes,
And kisses on the dear, dear wire bestows.
A noble matron of the Lamian line
Inquired of Janus, (offering meal and wine,)
If Pollio, at the Harmonic Games, would speed,
And wear the oaken crown, the victor's meed!
What could she for a husband, more, have done,
What for an only, an expiring son?
Yes; for a harper, the besotted dame
Approached the altar, reckless of her fame,
And veiled her head, and, with a pious air,
Followed the Aruspex through the form of prayer;
And trembled, and turned pale, as he explored
The entrails, breathless for the fatal word!
But, tell me, father Janus, if you please,
Tell me, most ancient of the deities,
Is your attention to such suppliants given?
If so—there is not much to do in heaven!
For a comedian, this consults your will,
For a tragedian, that; kept standing, still,
By this eternal route, the wretched priest
Feels his legs swell, and dies to be releast.
But let her rather sing, than roam the streets,

And thrust herself in every crowd she meets;
Chat with great generals, though her lord be there,
With lawless eye, bold front, and bosom bare.
She, too, with curiosity o'erflows,
And all the news of all the world she knows;
Knows what in Scythia, what in Thrace is done;
The secrets of the step-dame and the son;
Who speeds, and who is jilted: and can swear,
Who made the widow pregnant, when and where,
And what she said, and how she frolicked there.—
She first espied the star, whose baleful ray,
O'er Parthia, and Armenia, shed dismay:
She watches at the gates, for news to come,
And intercepts it, as it enters Rome;
Then, fraught with full intelligence, she flies
Through every street, and, mingling truth with lies,
Tells how Niphates bore down every mound,
And poured his desolating flood around;
How earth, convulsed, disclosed her caverns hoar,
And cities trembled, and—were seen no more!
And yet this itch, though never to be cured,
Is easier, than her cruelty, endured.
Should a poor neighbour's dog but discompose
Her rest a moment, wild with rage she grows;
"Ho! whips," she cries, "and flay that brute accurst;
"But flay that rascal there, who owns him, first."
Dangerous to meet while in these frantic airs,
And terrible to look at, she prepares
To bathe at night; she issues her commands,
And in long ranks forth march the obedient bands,
With tubs, cloths, oils:—for 'tis her dear delight
To sweat in clamour, tumult, and affright.
When her tired arms refuse the balls to ply,
And the lewd bath-keeper has rubbed her dry,
She calls to mind each miserable guest,
Long since with hunger, and with sleep opprest,
And hurries home; all glowing, all athirst,

For wine, whole flasks of wine! and swallows, first
Two quarts, to clear her stomach, and excite
A ravenous, an unbounded appetite!
Huisch! up it comes, good heavens! meat, drink, and all,
And flows in purple torrents round the hall;
Or a gilt ewer receives the foul contents,
And poisons all the house with vinous scents.
So, dropt into a vat, a snake is said
To drink and spew:—the husband turns his head,
Sick to the soul, from this disgusting scene,
And struggles to suppress his rising spleen.
 But she is more intolerable yet,
Who plays the critic when at table set;
Calls Virgil charming, and attempts to prove
Poor Dido right, in venturing all for love.
From Maro, and Maeonides, she quotes
The striking passages, and, while she notes
Their beauties and defects, adjusts her scales,
And accurately weighs which bard prevails.
The astonished guests sit mute: grammarians yield,
Loud rhetoricians, baffled, quit the field;
Even auctioneers and lawyers stand aghast,
And not a woman speaks!—So thick, and fast,
The wordy shower descends, that you would swear
A thousand bells were jangling in your ear,
A thousand basins clattering. Vex no more
Your trumpets and your timbrels, as of yore,
To ease the labouring moon; her single yell
Can drown their clangour, and dissolve the spell.
 She lectures too in Ethics, and declaims
On the chief good!—but, surely, she who aims
To seem too learn'd, should take the male array;
A hog, due offering, to Sylvanus slay,
And, with the Stoic's privilege, repair
To farthing baths, and strip in public there!
 Oh, never may the partner of my bed
With subtleties of logic stuff her head;

Nor whirl her rapid syllogisms around,
Nor with imperfect enthymemes confound!
Enough for me, if common things she know,
And boast the little learning schools bestow.
I hate the female pedagogue, who pores
O'er her Palaemon hourly; who explores
All modes of speech, regardless of the sense,
But tremblingly alive to mood and tense:
Who puzzles me with many an uncouth phrase,
From some old canticle of Numa's days;
Corrects her country friends, and cannot hear
Her husband solecise without a sneer!
A woman stops at nothing, when she wears
Rich emeralds round her neck, and in her ears
Pearls of enormous size; these justify
Her faults, and make all lawful in her eye.
Sure, of all ills with which mankind are curst,
A wife who brings you money is the worst.
Behold! her face a spectacle appears,
Bloated, and foul, and plastered to the ears
With viscous paste:—the husband looks askew,
And sticks his lips in this detested glue.
She meets the adulterer bathed, perfumed, and drest,
But rots in filth at home, a very pest!
For him she breathes of nard, for him alone
She makes the sweets of Araby her own;
For him, at length, she ventures to uncase,
Scales the first layer of roughcast from her face,
And, while the maids to know her now begin,
Clears, with that precious milk, her frowzy skin,
For which, though exiled to the frozen main,
She'd lead a drove of asses in her train!
But tell me yet; this thing, thus daubed and oiled,
Thus poulticed, plaistered, baked by turns and boiled,
Thus with pomatums, ointments, lackered o'er,
Is it a face, Ursidius, or a sore?
'Tis worth a little labour, to survey

Our wives more near, and trace 'em through the day.
If, dreadful to relate! the night foregone,
The husband turned his back, or lay alone,
All, all is lost; the housekeeper is stripped,
The tiremaid chidden, and the chairman whipped:
Rods, cords, and thongs avenge the master's sleep,
And force the guiltless house to wake and weep.
There are, who hire a beadle by the year,
To lash their servants round, who, pleased to hear
The eternal thong, bid him lay on, while they,
At perfect ease, the silkman's stores survey,
Chat with their female gossips, or replace
The cracked enamel on their treacherous face.
No respite yet:—they leisurely hum o'er
The countless items of the day before,
And bid him still lay on; till, faint with toil,
He drops the scourge; when, with a rancorous smile,
"Begone!" they thunder in a horrid tone,
"Now your accounts are settled, rogues, begone!"
But should she wish with nicer care to dress,
And now the hour of assignation press,
(Whether the adulterer for her coming wait
In Isis' fame, to bawdry consecrate,
Or in Lucullus' walks,) the house appears
A true Sicilian court, all gloom and tears.
The wretched Psecas, for the whip prepared,
With locks dishevelled, and with shoulders bared,
Attempts her hair: fire flashes from her eyes,
And, "Strumpet! why this curl so high?" she cries.
Instant the lash, without remorse, is plied,
And the blood stains her bosom, back, and side.
But why this fury?—Is the girl to blame,
If your air shocks you, or your features shame?
Another, trembling, on the left prepares
To open and arrange the straggling hairs
In ringlets trim: meanwhile, the council meet:
And first the nurse, a personage discreet,

Late from the toilet to the wheel removed,
(The effect of time,) yet still of taste approved,
Gives her opinion: then the rest, in course,
As age, or practice, lends their judgment force.
So warm they grow, and so much pains they take,
You'd think her honour or her life at stake!
So high they build her head, such tiers on tiers,
With wary hands, they pile, that she appears,
Andromache, before:—and what behind?
A dwarf, a creature of a different kind.—
Meanwhile, engrossed by these important cares,
She thinks not on her lord's distrest affairs,
Scarce on himself; but leads a separate life,
As if she were his neighbour, not his wife.
Or, but in this,—that all control she braves;
Hates where he loves, and squanders where he saves.
Room for Bellona's frantic votaries! room
For Cybele's mad enthusiasts! lo, they come!
A lusty semivir, whose part obscene,
A broken shell has severed smooth and clean,
A raw-boned, mitred priest, whom the whole choir
Of castrate priestlings reverence and admire,
Enters, with his wild rout; and bids the fair
Of autumn, and its sultry blasts, beware,
Unless she lustrate, with an hundred eggs,
Her household straight:—then, impudently begs
Her cast-off clothes, that every plague they fear
May enter them, and expiate all the year!
But lo! another tribe! at whose command,
See her, in winter, near the Tiber stand,
Break the thick ice, and, ere the sun appears,
Plunge in the crashing eddy to the ears;
Then, shivering from the keen and eager breeze,
Crawl round the banks, on bare and bleeding knees.
Should milkwhite Ió bid, from Meroë's isle
She'd fetch the sunburnt waters of the Nile,
To sprinkle in her fane; for she, it seems,

Has heavenly visitations in her dreams—
Mark the pure soul, with whom the gods delight
To hold high converse at the noon of night!
For this she cherishes, above the rest,
Her Io's favourite priest, a knave profest,
A holy hypocrite, who strolls abroad,
With his Anubis, his dog-headed god!
Girt by a linen-clad, a bald-pate crew
Of howling vagrants, who their cries renew
In every street, as up and down they run,
To find Osire, fit father to fit son!
He sues for pardon, when the liquorish dame
Abstains not from the interdicted game
On high and solemn days; for great the crime,
To stain the nuptial couch at such a time,
And great the atonement due;—the silver snake,
Abhorrent of the deed, was seen to quake!
Yet he prevails:—Osiris hears his prayers,
And, softened by a goose, the culprit spares.
Without her badge, a Jewess now draws near,
And, trembling, begs a trifle in her ear.
No common personage! she knows full well
The laws of Solyma, and she can tell
The dark decrees of heaven; a priestess she,
An hierarch of the consecrated tree!
Moved by these claims thus modestly set forth,
She gives her a few coins of little worth;
For Jews are moderate, and, for farthing fees,
Will sell what fortune, or what dreams you please.
The prophetess dismissed, a Syrian sage
Now enters, and explores the future page,
In a dove's entrails: there he sees exprest
A youthful lover: there, a rich bequest,
From some kind dotard: then a chick he takes,
And in its breast, and in a puppy's, rakes,
And sometimes in—an infant's he will teach
The art to others, and, when taught, impeach!

But chiefly in Chaldeans she believes:
Whate'er they say, with reverence she receives,
As if from Hammon's secret fount it came;
Since Delphi now, if we may credit fame,
Gives no responses, and a long dark night
Conceals the future hour from mortal sight.
Of these, the chief (such credit guilt obtains!)
Is he, who, banished oft, and oft in chains,
Stands forth the veriest knave; he who foretold
The death of Galba,—to his rival sold!
No juggler must for fame or profit hope,
Who has not narrowly escaped the rope;
Begged hard for exile, and, by special grace,
Obtained confinement in some desert place.—
To him your Tanaquil applies, in doubt
How long her jaundiced mother may hold out;
But first, how long her husband: next, inquires,
When she shall follow, to their funeral pyres,
Her sisters, and her uncles; last, if fate
Will kindly lengthen out the adulterer's date
Beyond her own;—content, if he but live,
And sure that heaven has nothing more to give!
Yet she may still be suffered; for, what woes
The louring aspect of old Saturn shows,
Or in what sign bright Venus ought to rise,
To shed her mildest influence from the skies;
Or what fore-fated month to gain is given,
And what to loss, (the mysteries of heaven,)
She knows not, nor pretends to know: but flee
The dame, whose Manual of Astrology
Still dangles at her side, smooth as chafed gum,
And fretted by her everlasting thumb!—
Deep in the science now, she leaves her mate
To go, or stay; but will not share his fate,
Withheld by trines and sextiles; she will look,
Before her chair be ordered, in the book,
For the fit hour; an itching eye endure,

Nor, till her scheme be raised, attempt the cure;
Nay, languishing in bed, receive no meat,
Till Petosyris bid her rise and eat.
The curse is universal: high and low
Are mad alike the future hour to know.
The rich consult a Babylonian seer,
Skilled in the mysteries of either sphere;
Or a grey-headed priest, hired by the state,
To watch the lightning, and to expiate.
The middle sort, a quack, at whose command
They lift the forehead, and make bare the hand;
While the sly lecher in the table pries,
And claps it wantonly, with gloating eyes
The poor apply to humbler cheats, still found
Beside the Circus wall, or city mound;
While she, whose neck no golden trinket bears,
To the dry ditch, or dolphin's tower, repairs,
And anxiously inquires which she shall choose,
The tapster, or old-clothes man? which refuse?
Yet these the pangs of childbirth undergo,
And all the yearnings of a mother know;
These, urged by want, assume the nurse's care,
And learn to breed the children which they bear.
Those shun both toil and danger; for, though sped,
The wealthy dame is seldom brought to bed:
Such the dire power of drugs, and such the skill
They boast, to cause miscarriages at will!
Weep'st thou? O fool! the blest invention hail,
And give the potion, if the gossips fail,
For, should thy wife her nine months' burthen bear,
An Aethiop's offspring might thy fortunes heir;
A sooty thing, fit only to affray,
And, seen at morn, to poison all the day!
Suppositious breeds, the hope and joy
Of fond, believing husbands, I pass by;
The beggars' bantlings, spawned in open air,
And left by some pond side, to perish there.—

From hence your Flamens, hence your Salians come;
Your Scauri, chiefs and magistrates of Rome!
Fortune stands tittering by, in playful mood,
And smiles, complacent, on the sprawling brood;
Takes them all naked to her fostering arms,
Feeds from her mouth, and in her bosom warms:
Then, to the mansions of the great she bears
The precious brats, and, for herself, prepares
A secret farce; adopts them for her own:
And, when her nurslings are to manhood grown,
She brings them forth, rejoiced to see them sped,
And wealth and honours dropping on their head!
Some purchase charms, some, more pernicious still
Thessalian philters, to subdue the will
Of an uxorious spouse, and make him bear
Blows, insults, all a saucy wife can dare.
Hence that swift lapse to second childhood; hence
Those vapours which envelop every sense;
This strange forgetfulness from hour to hour;
And well, if this be all:—more fatal power,
More terrible effects, the dose may have,
And force you, like Caligula, to rave,
When his Caesonia squeezed into the bowl
The dire excrescence of a new-dropt foal.—
Then Uproar rose; the universal chain
Of Order snapped, and Anarchy's wild reign
Came on apace, as if the queen of heaven
Had fired the Thunderer, and to madness driven.
Thy mushroom, Agrippine! was innocent,
To this accursed draught; that only sent
One palsied, bedrid sot, with gummy eyes,
And slavering lips, heels foremost to the skies:
This, to wild fury roused a bloody mind,
And called for fire and sword; this potion joined
In one promiscuous slaughter high and low,
And levelled half the nation at a blow.
Such is the power of philters! such the ill,

One sorceress can effect by wicked skill!
They hate their husband's spurious issue:—this
If this were all, were not, perhaps, amiss:
But they go further; and 'tis now some time
Since poisoning sons-in-laws scarce seemed a crime.
Mark then, ye fatherless! what I advise,
And trust, O, trust no dainties, if you're wise:
Ye heirs to large estates! touch not that fare,
Your mother's fingers have been busy there;
See! it looks livid, swollen:—O check your haste,
And let your wary fosterfather taste,
Whate'er she sets before you: fear her meat,
And be the first to look, the last to eat.
But this is fiction all! I pass the bound
Of Satire, and encroach on Tragic ground!
Deserting truth, I choose a fabled theme,
And, like the buskined bards of Greece, declaim,
In deep-mouthed tones, in swelling strains, on crimes
As yet unknown to our Rutulian climes!
Would it were so! but Pontia cries aloud,
"No, I performed it." See! the fact's avowed—
"I mingled poison for my children, I;
'Twas found upon me, wherefore then deny?"
What, two at once, most barbarous viper! two!
"Nay, seven, had seven been mine: believe it true!"
Now let us credit what the tragic stage
Displays of Procne and Medea's rage;
Crimes of dire name, which, disbelieved of yore,
Become familiar, and revolt no more:
Those ancient dames in scenes of blood were bold,
And wrought fell deeds, but not, as ours, for gold:—
In every age, we view, with less surprise,
Such horrors as from bursts of fury rise,
When stormy passions, scorning all control,
Rend the mad bosom, and unseat the soul.
As when impetuous winds, and driving rain,
Mine some huge rock that overhangs the plain,

The cumbrous mass descends with thundering force,
And spreads resistless ruin in its course.
Curse on the woman, who reflects by fits,
And in cold blood her cruelties commits!—
They see, upon the stage, the Grecian wife
Redeeming with her own her husband's life;
Yet, in her place, would willingly deprive
Their lords of breath to keep their dogs alive!
Abroad, at home, the Belides you meet,
And Clytemnestras swarm in every street;
But here the difference lies:—those bungling wives,
With a blunt axe hacked out their husbands' lives;
While now, the deed is done with dexterous art,
And a drugged bowl performs the axe's part.
Yet, if the husband, prescient of his fate,
Have fortified his breast with mithridate,
She baffles him e'en there, and has recourse
To the old weapon for a last resource.

The Vanity of Human Wishes

In every clime, from Ganges' distant stream
To Gades, gilded by the western beam,
Few, from the clouds of mental error free,
In its true light or good or evil see.
For what, with reason, do we seek or shun?
What plan, how happily soe'er begun,
But, finished, we our own success lament,
And rue the pains, so fatally misspent?—
To headlong ruin see whole houses driven,
Cursed with their prayers, by too indulgent heaven!
Bewildered thus by folly or by fate,
We beg pernicious gifts in every state,
In peace, in war. A full and rapid flow
Of eloquence, lays many a speaker low:
Even strength itself is fatal; Milo tries

His wondrous arms, and—in the trial dies!
But avarice wider spreads her deadly snare,
And hoards amassed with too successful care,
Hoards, which o'er all paternal fortunes rise,
As o'er the dolphin towers the whale in size.
For this, in other times, at Nero's word,
The ruffian bands unsheathed the murderous sword,
Rushed to the swelling coffers of the great,
Chased Lateranus from his lordly seat,
Besieged too-wealthy Seneca's wide walls,
And closed, terrific, round Longinus' halls:
While sweetly in their cocklofts slept the poor,
And heard no soldier thundering at their door.
The traveller, freighted with a little wealth,
Sets forth at night, and wins his way by stealth:
Even then, he fears the bludgeon and the blade,
And starts and trembles at a rush's shade;
While, void of care, the beggar trips along,
And, in the spoiler's presence, trolls his song.
The first great wish that all with rapture own,
The general cry, to every temple known,
Is, gold, gold, gold!—"and let, all-gracious Powers,
The largest chest the Forum boasts be ours!"
Yet none from earthen bowls destruction sip:
Dread then the draught, when, mantling, at your lip,
The goblet sparkles, radiant from the mine,
And the broad gold inflames the ruby wine.
And do we, now, admire the stories told
Of the two Sages, so renowned of old;
How this for ever laughed, whene'er he stept
Beyond the threshold; that, for ever wept?
But all can laugh:—the wonder yet appears,
What fount supplied the eternal stream of tears!
Democritus, at every step he took,
His sides with unextinguished laughter shook,
Though, in his days. Abdera's simple towns,
No fasces knew, chairs, litters, purple gowns.—

What! had he seen, in his triumphal car,
Amid the dusty Cirque, conspicuous far,
The Praetor perched aloft, superbly drest
In Jove's proud tunic, with a trailing vest
Of Tyrian tapestry, and o'er him spread
A crown, too bulky for a mortal head,
Borne by a sweating slave, maintained to ride
In the same car, and mortify his pride!
Add now the bird, that, with expanded wing,
From the raised sceptre seems prepared to spring;
And trumpets here, and there the long parade
Of duteous friends, who head the cavalcade;
Add, too, the zeal of clients robed in white,
Who hang upon his reins, and grace the sight,
Unbribed, unbought,—save by the dole, at night!
Yes, in those days, in every varied scene,
The good old man found matter for his spleen.
A wondrous sage! whose story makes it clear
That men may rise in folly's atmosphere,
Beneath Boeotian fogs, of soul sublime,
And great examples to the coming time—
He laughed aloud to see the vulgar fears,
Laughed at their joys, and sometimes at their tears:
Secure the while, he mocked at Fortune's frown,
And when she threatened, bade her hang or drown!
Superfluous then, or fatal, is the prayer,
Which, to the Immortals' knees, we fondly bear.
Some, Power hurls headlong from her envied height,
Some, the broad tablet, flashing on the sight,
With titles, names: the statues, tumbled down,
Are dragged by hooting thousands through the town;
The brazen cars torn rudely from the yoke,
And, with the blameless steeds, to shivers broke—
Then roar the fires! the sooty artist blows,
And all Sejanus in the furnace glows;
Sejanus, once so honoured, so adored,
And only second to the world's great lord,

Runs glittering from the mould, in cups and cans,
Basins and ewers, plates, pitchers, pots, and pans.
"Crown all your doors with bay, triumphant bay!
Sacred to Jove, the milk-white victim slay;
For lo! where great Sejanus by the throng,
A joyful spectacle! is dragged along.
What lips! what cheeks! ha, traitor!—for my part,
I never loved the fellow—in my heart."
"But tell me; Why was he adjudged to bleed?
And who discovered? and who proved the deed?"
"Proved!—a huge, wordy letter came to-day
From Capreae." Good! what think the people? They!
They follow fortune, as of old, and hate,
With their whole souls, the victim of the state.
Yet would the herd, thus zealous, thus on fire,
Had Nurscia met the Tuscan's fond desire,
And crushed the unwary prince, have all combined,
And hailed Sejanus, master of mankind!
For since their votes have been no longer bought,
All public care has vanished from their thought;
And those who once, with unresisted sway,
Gave armies, empire, every thing, away,
For two poor claims have long renounced the whole,
And only ask,—the Circus and the Dole.
"But there are more to suffer." "So I find;
A fire so fierce for one was ne'er designed.
I met my friend Brutidius, and I fear,
From his pale looks, he thinks there's danger near.
What if this Ajax, in his frenzy, strike,
Suspicious of our zeal, at all alike!"
"True: fly we then, our loyalty to show;
And trample on the carcass of his foe,
While yet exposed on Tiber's banks it lies"—
But let our slaves be there," another cries:
"Yes; let them (lest our ardour they forswear,
And drag us, pinioned, to the bar,) be there."
Thus of the favourite's fall the converse ran,

And thus the whisper passed from man to man.
Lured by the splendour of his happier hour,
Would'st thou possess Sejanus' wealth and power;
See crowds of suppliants at thy levee wait,
Give this to sway the army, that the state;
And keep a prince in ward, retired to reign
O'er Capreae's crags, with his Chaldean train?
Yes, yes, thou would'st (for I can read thy breast)
Enjoy that favour which he once possest,
Assume all offices, grasp all commands,
The Imperial Horse, and the Praetorian Bands.
'Tis nature, this; even those who want the will,
Pant for the dreadful privilege to kill:
Yet what delight can rank and power bestow,
Since every joy is balanced by its woe!
—Still would'st thou choose the favourite's purple, say?
Or, thus forewarned, some paltry hamlet sway?
At Gabii, or Fidenae, rules propound,
For faulty measures, and for wares unsound;
And take the tarnished robe, and petty state,
Of poor Ulubrae's ragged magistrate?—
You grant me then, Sejanus grossly erred,
Nor knew what prayer his folly had preferred:
For when he begged for too much wealth and power,
Stage above stage, he raised a tottering tower,
And higher still, and higher; to be thrown,
With louder crash, and wider ruin down!
What wrought the Crassi, what the Pompeys' doom,
And his, who bowed the stubborn neck of Rome?
What but the wild, the unbounded wish to rise,
Heard, in malignant kindness, by the skies!
Few kings, few tyrants, find a bloodless end,
Or to the grave, without a wound, descend.
The child, with whom a trusty slave is sent,
Charged with his little scrip, has scarcely spent
His mite at school, ere all his bosom glows
With the fond hope he never more foregoes,

To reach Demosthenes' or Tully's name,
Rival of both in eloquence and fame!—
Yet by this eloquence, alas! expired
Each orator, so envied, so admired!
Yet by the rapid and resistless sway
Of torrent genius, each was swept away!
Genius, for that, the baneful potion sped,
And lopt, from this, the hands and gory head:
While meaner pleaders unmolested stood,
Nor stained the rostrum with their wretched blood.
"How fortunate a natal day was thine,
In that late consulate, O Rome, of mine!"
Oh, soul of eloquence! had all been found
An empty vaunt, like this, a jingling sound,
Thou might'st, in peace, thy humble fame have borne,
And laughed the swords of Antony to scorn!
Yet this would I prefer, the common jest,
To that which fired the fierce triumvir's breast,
That second scroll, where eloquence divine
Burst on the ear, from every glowing line.
And he too fell, whom Athens, wondering, saw
Her fierce democracy, at will, o'erawe,
And "fulmine over Greece!" some angry power
Scowled, with dire influence, on his natal hour.—
Bleared with the glowing mass, the ambitious sire,
From anvils, sledges, bellows, tongs, and fire,
From tempting swords, his own more safe employ,
To study rhetoric, sent his hopeful boy.
The spoils of war; the trunk in triumph placed,
With all the trophies of the battle graced,
Crushed helms, and battered shields; and streamers borne
From vanquished fleets, and beams from chariots torn;
And arcs of triumph, where the captive foe
Bends, in mute anguish, o'er the pomp below,
Are blessings, which the slaves of glory rate
Beyond a mortal's hope, a mortal's fate!
Fired with the love of these, what countless swarms,

Barbarians, Romans, Greeks, have rushed to arms,
All danger slighted, and all toil defied,
And madly conquered, or as madly died!
So much the raging thirst of fame exceeds
The generous warmth, which prompts to worthy deeds,
That none confess fair Virtue's genuine power,
Or woo her to their breast, without a dower.
Yet has this wild desire, in other days,
This boundless avarice of a few for praise,
This frantic rage for names to grace a tomb,
Involved whole countries in one general doom:
Vain "rage!" the roots of the wild fig-tree rise,
Strike through the marble, and their memory dies!
For, like their mouldering tenants, tombs decay,
And, with the dust they hide, are swept away.
Produce the urn that Hannibal contains,
And weigh the mighty dust, which yet remains:
And is this all! Yet this was once the bold,
The aspiring chief, whom Afric could not hold,
Though stretched in breadth from where the Atlantic roars,
To distant Nilus, and his sun-burnt shores,
In length, from Carthage to the burning zone,
Where other Moors, and elephants are known.
—Spain conquered, o'er the Pyrenees he bounds:
Nature opposed her everlasting mounds,
Her Alps, and snows; o'er these, with torrent force,
He pours, and rends through rocks his dreadful course.
Already at his feet Italia lies;—
Yet thundering on, "Think nothing done," he cries,
"Till Rome, proud Rome, beneath my fury falls,
And Afric's standards float along her walls!"
Big words!—but view his figure! view his face!
O, for some master-hand the lines to trace,
As through the Etrurian swamps, by floods increast,
The one-eyed chief urged his Getulian beast!
But what ensued? Illusive Glory, say.
Subdued on Zama's memorable day,

He flies in exile to a petty state,
With headlong haste! and, at a despot's gate,
Sits, mighty suppliant! of his life in doubt,
Till the Bithynian's morning nap be out.
No swords, nor spears, nor stones from engines hurled,
Shall quell the man whose frown alarmed the world:
The vengeance due to Cannae's fatal field,
And floods of human gore, a ring shall yield!—
Fly, madman, fly! at toil and danger mock,
Pierce the deep snow, and scale the eternal rock,
To please the rhetoricians, and become
A declamation for the boys of Rome!
One world, the ambitious youth of Pella found
Too small; and tossed his feverish limbs around,
And gasped for breath, as if immured the while
In Gyarae, or Serîpho's rocky isle:
But entering Babylon, found ample room
Within the narrow limits of a tomb!
Death, the great teacher, Death alone proclaims
The true dimensions of our puny frames.
The daring tales, in Grecian story found,
Were once believed:—of Athos sailed around,
Of fleets, that bridges o'er the waves supplied,
Of chariots, rolling on the stedfast tide,
Of lakes exhausted, and of rivers quaft,
By countless nations, at a morning's draught,
And all that Sostratus so wildly sings,
Besotted poet, of the king of kings.
But how returned he, say? this soul of fire,
This proud barbarian, whose impatient ire
Chastised the winds, that disobeyed his nod,
With stripes, ne'er suffered from the Aeolian god;
Fettered the Shaker of the sea and land—
But, in pure clemency, forbore to brand!
And sure, if aught can touch the Powers above,
This calls for all their service, all their love!—
But how returned he? say;—His navy lost,

In a small bark he fled the hostile coast,
And, urged by terror, drove his labouring prore,
Through floating carcasses, and floods of gore.
So Xerxes sped, so speed the conquering race;
They catch at glory, and they clasp disgrace!
"Life! length of life!" For this, with earnest cries.
Or sick or well, we supplicate the skies.
Pernicious prayer! for mark what ills attend,
Still, on the old, as to the grave they bend:
A ghastly visage, to themselves unknown,
For a smooth skin, a hide with scurf o'ergrown,
And such a cheek, as many a grandam ape,
In Tabraca's thick woods, is seen to scrape.
Strength, beauty, and a thousand charms beside,
With sweet distinction, youth from youth divide;
While age presents one universal face:
A faltering voice, a weak and trembling pace,
An ever-dropping nose, a forehead bare,
And toothless gums to mumble o'er its fare.
Poor wretch! behold him, tottering to his fall,
So loathsome to himself, wife, children, all,
That those who hoped the legacy to share,
And flattered long,—disgusted, disappear.
The sluggish palate dulled, the feast no more
Excites the same sensations as of yore;
Taste, feeling, all, a universal blot,
And e'en the rites of love remembered not:
Or if,—through the long night he feebly strives
To raise a flame where not a spark survives;
While Venus marks the effort with distrust,
And hates the grey decrepitude of lust.
Another loss!—no joy can song inspire,
Though famed Seleucus lead the warbling quire:
The sweetest airs escape him; and the lute,
Which thrills the general ear, to him is mute.—
He sits, perhaps, too distant: bring him near;
Alas! 'tis still the same: he scarce can hear
The deep-toned horn, the trumpet's clanging sound,

And the loud blast which shakes the benches round.
Even at his ear, his slave must bawl the hour,
And shout the comer's name, with all his power!
Add that a fever only warms his veins,
And thaws the little blood which yet remains;
That ills of every kind, and every name,
Rush in, and seize the unresisting frame.
Ask you how many? I could sooner say
How many drudges Hippia kept in pay,
How many orphans Basilus beguiled,
How many pupils Haemolus defiled,
How many men long Maura overmatched,
How many patients Themison despatched
In one short autumn; nay, perhaps, record,
How many villas call my quondam barber lord!
These their shrunk shoulders, those their hams bemoan;
This hath no eyes, and envies that with one:
This takes, as helpless at the board he stands,
His food, with bloodless lips, from others' hands;
While that, whose eager jaws, instinctive, spread
At every feast, gapes feebly to be fed,
Like Procne's brood, when, laden with supplies,
From bill to bill, the fasting mother flies.
But other ills, and worse, succeed to those:
His limbs long since were gone; his memory goes.
Poor driveller! he forgets his servants quite,
Forgets, at morn, with whom he supped at night;
Forgets the children he begot and bred;
And makes a strumpet heiress in their stead.—
So much avails it the rank arts to use,
Gained, by long practice, in the loathsome stews!
But grant his senses unimpaired remain;
Still woes on woes succeed, a mournful train!
He sees his sons, his daughters, all expire,
His faithful consort on the funeral pyre,
Sees brothers, sisters, friends, to ashes turn,
And all he loved or loved him, in their urn.
Lo here, the dreadful fine we ever pay

For life protracted to a distant day!
To see our house by sickness, pain pursued,
And scenes of death incessantly renewed:
In sable weeds to waste the joyless years,
And drop, at last, mid solitude and tears!
The Pylian's (if we credit Homer's page)
Was only second to the raven's age.
"O happy, sure, beyond the common rate,
Who warded off, so long, the stroke of fate!
Who told his years by centuries, who so oft
Quaffed the new must! O happy, sure"—But, soft.
This "happy" man of destiny complained,
Cursed his grey hairs, and every god arraigned;
What time he lit the pyre, with streaming eyes,
And, in dark volumes, saw the flames arise
Round his Antilochus:—"Tell me," he cried,
To every friend who lingered at his side,
"Tell me what crimes have roused the Immortals' hate,
That thus, in vengeance, they protract my date?"
So questioned heaven Laertes—Peleus so—
(Their hoary heads bowed to the grave with woe)
While this bewailed his son, at Ilium slain;
That his, long wandering o'er the faithless main.
While Troy yet flourished, had her Priam died,
With what solemnity, what funeral pride,
Had he descended, every duty paid,
To old Assaracus, illustrious shade!—
Hector himself, bedewed with many a tear,
Had joined his brothers to support the bier;
And Troy's dejected dames, a numerous train,
Followed, in sable pomp, and wept amain,
As sad Polyxena her pall had rent,
And wild Cassandra raised the loud lament:
Had he but fallen, ere his adulterous boy
Spread his bold sails, and left the shores of Troy.
But what did lengthened life avail the sire?
To see his realm laid waste by sword and fire.
Then too, too late, the feeble soldier tried

Unequal arms, and flung his crown aside;
Tottered, his children's murderer to repel,
With trembling haste, and at Jove's altar fell,
Fell without effort; like the steer, that, now,
Time-worn and weak, and, by the ungrateful plough,
Spurned forth to slaughter to the master's knife
Yields his shrunk veins and miserable life.
His end, howe'er, was human; while his mate,
Doomed, in a brute, to drain the dregs of fate,
Pursued the foes of Troy from shore to shore,
And barked and howled at those she cursed before.

I pass, while hastening to the Roman page,
The Pontic king, and Croesus, whom the Sage
Wisely forbad in fortune to confide,
Or take the name of happy, till he died.

That Marius, exiled from his native plains,
Was hid in fens, discovered, bound in chains;
That, bursting these, to Africa he fled,
And, through the realms he conquered, begged his bread,
Arose from age, from treacherous age alone:
For what had Rome, or earth, so happy known,
Had he, in that blest moment, ceased to live,
When, graced with all that Victory could give,
"Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,"
He first alighted from his Cimbrian car!

Campania, prescient of her Pompey's fate,
Sent a kind fever to arrest his date:
When lo! a thousand suppliant altars rise,
And public prayers obtain him of the skies.
Ill done! that head, thus rescued from the grave,
His evil fate and ours, by Nilus' wave,
Lopt from the trunk:—such mutilation dire
Cornelius 'scaped; Cethegus fell entire;
And Catiline pressed, whole, the funeral pyre.

Whene'er the fane of Venus meets her eye,
The anxious mother breathes a secret sigh
For handsome boys; but asks, with bolder prayer,
That all her girls be exquisitely fair!

"And wherefore not? Latona, in the sight
Of Dian's beauty, took unblamed delight."
True; but Lucretia cursed her fatal charms,
When spent with struggling in a Tarquin's arms;
And poor Virginia would have changed her grace
For Rutila's crooked back and homely face.
"But boys may still be fair?" No; they destroy
Their parents' peace, and murder all their joy;
For rarely do we meet, in one combined,
A beauteous body and a virtuous mind,
Though, through the rugged line, there still has run
A Sabine sanctity, from sire to son.—
Besides, should Nature, in her kindest mood,
Confer the ingenuous flush of modest blood,
The disposition chaste as unsunned snow—
(And what can Nature more than these bestow,
These, which no art, no care can give?)—even then,
They cannot hope, they must not, to be men!
Smit with their charms, the imps of hell appear,
And pour their proffers in a parent's ear,
For prostitution!—infamously bold,
And trusting to the almighty power of gold:
While youths in shape and air less formed to please,
No tyrants mutilate, no Neros seize.
Go now, and triumph in your beauteous boy,
Your Ganymede! whom other ills annoy,
And other dangers wait: his graces known,
He stands professed, the favourite of the town;
And dreads, incessant dreads, on every hand,
The vengeance which a husband's wrongs demand:
For sure detection follows soon or late;
Born under Mars, he cannot scape his fate.
Oft on the adulterer, too, the furious spouse
Inflicts worse evils than the law allows;
By blows, stripes, gashes some are robbed of breath,
And others, by the mullet, racked to death.
"But my Endymion will more lucky prove,
And serve a beauteous mistress, all for love."

No; he will soon to ugliness be sold,
And serve a toothless grandam, all for gold.
Servilia will not lose him; jewels, clothes,
All, all she sells, and all on him bestows;
For women nought to the dear youth deny,
Or think his labours can be bought too high:
When love's the word, the naked sex appear,
And every niggard is a spendthrift here.
"But if my boy with virtue be endued,
What harm will þeauty do him?" Nay, what good?
Say, what availed, of old, to Theseus' son,
The stern resolve? what, to Bellerophon?—
O, then did Phaedra redden, then her pride
Took fire, to be so stedfastly denied!
Then, too, did Sthenoboea glow with shame,
And both burst forth with unextinguished flame!
A woman scorned is pitiless as fate,
For, there, the dread of shame adds stings to hate.
But Silius comes.—Now, be thy judgment tried:
Shall he accept, or not, the proffered bride,
And marry Caesar's wife? hard point, in truth:
Lo! this most noble, this most beauteous youth,
Is hurried off, a helpless sacrifice
To the lewd glance of Messalina's eyes!
—Haste, bring the victim: in the nuptial vest
Already see the impatient Empress drest;
The genial couch prepared, the accustomed sum
Paid out, the augurs and the notaries come.
"But why all these?" You think, perhaps, the rite
Were better, known to few, and kept from sight:
Not so the lady; she abhors a flaw,
And wisely calls for every form of law.
But what shall Silius do? refuse to wed?
A moment sees him numbered with the dead.
Consent, and gratify the eager dame?
He gains a respite, till the tale of shame,
Through town and country, reach the Emperor's ear,
Still sure the last—his own disgrace to hear.

Then let him, if a day's precarious life
Be worth his study, make the fair his wife;
For wed or not, poor youth, 'tis still the same,
And still the axe must mangle that fine frame!
Say then, shall man, deprived all power of choice,
Ne'er raise to heaven the supplicating voice?
Not so; but to the gods his fortunes trust:
Their thoughts are wise, their dispensations just.
What best may profit or delight they know,
And real good for fancied bliss bestow:
With eyes of pity they our frailties scan;
More dear to them, than to himself, is man.
By blind desire, by headlong passion driven,
For wife and heirs we daily weary Heaven:
Yet still 'tis Heaven's prerogative to know,
If heirs, or wife, will bring us weal or woe.
But, (for 'tis good our humble hope to prove,)
That thou may'st, still, ask something from above:
Thy pious offerings to the temple bear,
And, while the altars blaze, be this thy prayer.
O thou, who know'st the wants of human kind,
Vouchsafe me health of body, health of mind;
A soul prepared to meet the frowns of fate,
And look undaunted on a future state;
That reckons death a blessing, yet can bear
Existence nobly, with its weight of care;
That anger and desire alike restrains,
And counts Alcides' toils, and cruel pains,
Superior far to banquets, wanton nights,
And all the Assyrian monarch's soft delights!
Here bound, at length, thy wishes. I but teach
What blessings man, by his own powers, may reach
The path to peace is virtue. We should see,
If wise, O Fortune, nought divine in thee:
But we have deified a name alone,
And fixed in heaven thy visionary throne!

MARTIAL

To Alcimus

SWEET Alcimus, cut off in youth's bright bloom,
Light lies Labici's earth upon thy clay:
No marble pile I rear to crown thy tomb,
The toil were vain—'twould crumble and decay;
But the frail box, the palm with shady leaf,
The green turf watered with affection's tears,
These are the plain memorials of my grief—
An honour that will live through endless years.
When Fate shall snap my thread, life's journey o'er,
So may my dust repose—I ask no more.

The Book

WHOSE shalt thou be, my tiny leaflets? say:
Come, choose a patron, and make no delay.
No?—then some smoky kitchen thee receives
To cover tunnies with thy dripping leaves;
To wrap up incense like a useless rag,
Or be transformed into a pepper-bag.
Wilt to Faustinus now?—pray go thy way;
Perfumed with cedar-oil, you surely may:
Bedeck thy fronts with ornaments the while,
And in illuminated bosses smile.
Then let luxurious purple clothe thee over—
Bear a proud scarlet title on thy cover.

Now off! in Probus' company appear,
Without a scruple and without a fear.

To Diadumenus

SWEET as perfume of an apple bit by tooth of tender maiden,
Or as zephyr from Corycian saffron-glade—
Sweet as branches of the vine with snow-white virgin blossoms laden,
Or as plains when sheep have newly cropped the blade—

Sweet as myrtle, or as Arab that has come from reaping spices,
Or as amber warmed by friction's heating power—
Sweet as from Assyrian incense is the pale-blue flame that rises,
Or as delvèd soil bedewed by summer shower—

Sweet as breathes the circling garland round the nard-anointed tresses,
Is thy kiss, cold Diadumenus! to me:
Oh, I would that thou wouldst freely shower on me thy fond caresses,
All those sweets and more than all I'd find in thee!

Fame

'FAME comes not to the living. Strange!' you say,
'How few can love the artists of their day!'
The cause is this, that envy's cross-eyed view
Will always set the old above the new.
Thus haunt we Pompey's ancient porch—and thus
Fools praise the crumbled fanes of Catulus.
So Virgil's Rome pored still o'er Ennius' page,
And Homer lived unhonoured of his age;

Few were his peers to laud Menander's plays;
Who save Corinna knew her Ovid's lays?
Yet soft, my books, no haste, nor hurry fate;
If fame must wait on death, then let it wait.

For Erotion's Grave

THOU Mother dear and thou my Father's shade,
To you I now commit the gentle maid,
 Erotion, my little love, my sweet;
 Let not her shuddering spirit fear to meet
The ghosts, but soothe her lest she be afraid.
How should a baby heart be undismayed
To pass the lair where Cerberus is laid?
 The little six-year maiden gently greet.
Dear reverend spirits, give her kindly aid
And let her play in some Elysian glade,
 Lisping my name sometimes—and I entreat
 Lie softly on her, kindly earth; her feet,
Such tiny feet, on thee were lightly laid.

Erotion

A CHILD more sweet-voiced than a swan full-grown,
Softer than all Galaesus' lamb's-wool down,
More dainty than the shells from Lucrine meres,
More fair than new-cut ivory appears,
Or Red Sea stones, or snow, or lilies white,
Whose locks than Baetic fleeces shine more bright
And could the dormouse and Rhine's knots surpass,
Whose breath than Paestan roses sweeter was,
Or Attic honey, or an amber ball
Snatched from a maiden's hand and warm withal,
Compared with whom a peacock's hues were pale,
Squirrels seemed clumsy, and a phoenix stale—

My little love-bird, my Erotion,
Lies in the pyre still warm; her life is done;
Six winters had not passed above her head
When fate relentless struck my playmate dead.

And yet friend Paetus bids me not to grieve—
'My wife,' he cries, 'is buried, but I live.
And she was rich and proud, of lineage brave.
Why weep so sorely for a little slave?'
And therewithal, to show his heartfelt pain,
He beats his breast and tears his hair again.
How brave is Paetus. He endures his life:
And yet he's got a fortune from his wife.

Turnabout

LEAVES his game the schoolboy sadly,
At his master's call dismayed,
And the drunken gambler, badly
By the luring dice betrayed,
Dragged from den where all-unheeding
He caroused an hour before,
At the Aedile's bar is pleading
With a heavy heart and sore.

All the Saturnalia over!
And no little gift—ah no!
Such as Galla sent her lover—
Sent her Martial years ago.
So roll past, my dull December,
And, when you your nuts will crack
On the first of March, remember,
Galla, I shall pay you back.

On the Tomb of Claudius Etruscus and His Wife

HERE lies the sage, long in the palace known,
Who bore the Emperor's favour and his frown
Undaunted. By their children's love at rest
Husband and wife are of one grave possessed.
She died in youth, robbed of her life's spring bloom;
The father to his ninetieth year did come.
Yet all who see his children's tears believe
That they for one untimely taken grieve.

The Winter Kiss

IN DECEMBER'S frost and sleet
Still your chilly kisses greet
Every friend you chance to meet!
 What a trick!
Such a vengeance to pursue
Were a cruel thing to do,
Though they all had beaten you
 With a stick.
If my wife or little maid
To embrace me had essayed,
I had started quite afraid
 In such weather,
And if you suppose your kiss
Is a yet sublimer bliss,
That idea you may dismiss
 Altogether.
From your snout ('tis like a dog's)
Hangs the rime of frozen fogs,
And the beard it fairly clogs
 Round your throat,

Where the shaggy mass coheres
Till it actually appears
Like the mass a shepherd shears
From a goat.
Though a greasy Gaul's caress
Might disgust me, I confess,
Would it cause such wretchedness
As you bring?
Common decency display,
And in charity, I pray
Put your kisses safe away
Till the spring.

On a Child's Grave

SHED a tear and so pass by:
Here a little child doth lie,
Roman both by birth and name,
Who to death too early came.
Baby face and baby prattle
Could not save him in that battle.
Cruel Fate cut short his thread:
Little Urbicus lies dead.
May thy children happier be,
And live on surviving thee.

Simplicity

GIVE me the girl who's always willing,
Who can suffice for lovers three,
Whose price complete is just one shilling,
Who gives my man what she gives me.
Let Frenchmen in their arms enfold
Fine ladies with their silks and all,
They care for nothing else but gold,
Give me the girl who wears a shawl.

To Flaccus

So MAYST thou lying on a bank of flowers—
Its rim bedewed around with diamond showers
From rippling rill whose dancing pebbles play,—
All thoughts of trouble banished far away—
In thy dark wine-cup mingle summer snows,
And wreathe thy temples with the blushing rose:

And laughing loves be thine—a gamesome train—
Thine be a maiden chaste, yet fond and fain,
But, Flaccus (and now mark my wish and prayer),
Oh! shun the hot and noxious Cyprus air,
When threshing-floors receive the crackling grain,
And fiercely bristles Leo's tawny mane.

Dear Paphian goddess! I implore of thee,
Send back the generous youth unharmed to me,
And so shall March's Kalends aye be thine;
And incense, victims, bowls of rosy wine,
And many a sacred slice—oblations due—
Upon thy shining altars thou shalt view.

Real Life

YE FOLK, who read of Oedipus and Scylla and Medea
And King Thyestes in the dark, you'll find no wonders here.
What good to us are boys who lived in ages long by gone,
Parthenopaeus, Attis, and the drowsed Endymion,
Or ravished Hylas, or the lad who lost his pinions white,
Or he who hates the amorous stream, the young Hermaphrodite.
In silly fables such as these the foolish may delight,
But of this volume Life will say—' 'Tis mine'—and she'll be right.

No Centaurs here nor Gorgons nor fierce Harpies you will see;
My pages have the savour of our own humanity;
'To read about myself,' you say, 'is scarcely worth my while.'
Then turn to old Callimachus: you'll find him just your style.

A Villa at Formiae

SWEET Formiae, the pleasant home
Apollinaris loveth well,
Released from all the cares of Rome
'Tis here that he would choose to dwell;
Tibur his heart cannot beguile
Though there his loving spouse was born;
He seeks not Circe's witching isle,
Praneste, Antium, he doth scorn;
Though fair be Tusculum's retreat,
And Caieta has ancient fame,
Though Liris' gentle stream be sweet,
His fealty they cannot claim;
He chooses not thy cooling shade.
Marica, and he would forsake
The fountain of the water-maid
Who plunges in the Lucrine lake;
Here is no stagnant sea or air
The deep, a living thing, exhales,
Soft breath to toy with Thais' hair
And gently fill the painted sails;
How lightly here the Zephyrs play,
As though a maiden's dainty hand
The heat of summer to allay,
Her loveliness had softly fanned;
Not far the fisher needs to roam,
But in the waters clear and still

Beneath the casement of his home
May watch and take his prey at will;
And here though Aeolus should rave,
The table lacks not dainty fare;
The fish-pool fears no angry wave,
Pike, mullet, lampreys all are there,
Home-bred its denizens and tame
Huge mullets here and barbel swim,
Whose keeper knows them all by name
And at his call they come to him;
Their lord, alas, through all the year
From city toil is seldom free,
Few days, O Rome, thou givest him here,
How many he must give to thee;
Oh happy they who may abide
In this fair place although in thrall;
These pleasures doth their lord provide,
His servants have the joy of all.

A Happy Life

DEAR, pleasant Martial, listen if you please;
The secrets of a happy life are these:
Wealth, not by labour earned, but from thy sire;
A fertile field; an ever-blazing fire;
No wrangling; clothes to keep your body warm;
A mind at ease, and moderate strength of arm;
A healthful body; wise simplicity;
Friends like thyself, and pleasant company;
A board well furnished aye with homely fare;
Thy nights not riotous, but free from care;
Nowise morose, yet modest be thy bed;
Light be thy slumber, soon night's shadows sped:
Pleased with thy lot, for nothing further pray;
Nor dread, nor wish to see, life's final day.

Erotion's Grave

HERE sleeps the body of the little maid,
Erotion,
Ere her sixth winter fate had called her shade
To hasten on;
Whoe'er thou art who after me shall own
This tiny plot,
Lay year by year the dues upon her stone;
Forget her not.
So shall thy house endure nor suffering know,
And this remain
The only sign and monument of woe
On thy domain.

To a Schoolmaster

GOOD schoolmaster, pray give your classes a rest.
If you do, I will ask that next term you be pressed
By curly-haired boys flocking close to your table,
And no short-hand clerk or quick counter be able
To boast that he has a more studious crew
Of pupils and fonder of teacher than you.
The hot sunny days are upon us again,
And blazing July burns the ripening grain,
So let your grim rod and your whip, put to sleep,
Till the Ides of October a holiday keep.
In summer if children can only stay well,
They learn quite enough and can rest for a spell.

Charmenion

To BOAST, Charmenion, is your practice
That you're from Corinth—now, the fact is
Disputed not by one or other—
But why, for heaven's sake, call me Brother—
Me, born in Celteberia's land,
A citizen from Tagus' strand?
Say, is't that everybody traces
A wondrous likeness in our faces?
You walk with sleek and flowing hair,
While my rough Spanish crop I wear;
Your polished skin of pumice speaks,
While I have hairy limbs and cheeks;
You lisp—your tongue's so plaguy weak,
My infant child could louder speak:
Are doves like eagles, prithee tell,
Or like strong lion lithe gazelle?
From saying Brother then desist, or,
Charmenion, I may call you Sister.

Wealth

STILL pants for gold the millionaire,
He's never done;
To many Fortune gives too large a share,
Enough to none.

HADRIAN

Hadrian to His Soul

AH! GENTLE, fleeting, wav'ring sprite,
Friend and associate of this clay!
To what unknown region borne
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
No more with wonted humour gay,
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.

ANONYMOUS

The Vigil of Venus

LET THOSE love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

The spring, the new, the warbling spring appears,
The youthful season of reviving years;
In spring the loves enkindle mutual heats,
The feather'd nation choose their tuneful mates,
The trees grow fruitful with descending rain,
And, drest in different greens, adorn the plain.
She comes; tomorrow beauty's empress roves
Through walks that winding run within the groves;
She twines the shooting myrtle into bowers,
And ties their meeting tops with wreaths of flowers;
Then, raised sublimely on her easy throne,
From nature's powerful dictates draws her own.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

'Twas on that day which saw the teeming flood
Swell round, impregnate with celestial blood;
Wand'ring in circles stood the finny crew,
The rest was left a void expanse of blue;
Then parent ocean work'd with heaving throes,
And dripping wet the fair Dione rose.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

She paints the purple year with varied show,
Tips the green gem, and makes the blossom glow.
She makes the turgid buds receive the breeze,
Expand to leaves and shade the naked trees.
When gath'ring damps the misty nights diffuse,
She sprinkles all the morn with balmy dews;
Bright trembling pearls depend at every spray,
And kept from falling, seem to fall away.
A glossy freshness hence the rose receives,
And blushes sweet through all her silken leaves;
(The drops descending through the silent night,
While stars serenely roll their golden light;)
Close till the morn her humid veil she holds;
Then deck'd with virgin pomp the flower unfolds.
Soon will the morning blush, ye maids, prepare;
In rosy garlands bind your flowing hair;
'Tis Venus' plant: the blood fair Venus shed,
O'er the gay beauty pour'd immortal red:
From love's soft kiss a sweet ambrosial smell
Was taught for ever on the leaves to dwell;
From gems, from flames, from orient rays of light,
The richest lustre makes her purple bright;
And she tomorrow weds; the sportive gale
Unties her zone; she bursts the verdant veil;
Through all her sweets the rifling lover flies,
And as he breathes, her glowing fires arise.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

Now fair Dione to the myrtle grove
Sends the gay Nymphs, and sends her tender love.
And shall they venture? Is it safe to go,
While nymphs have hearts and Cupid wears a bow?
Yes, safely venture; 'tis his mother's will;
He walks unarm'd and undesiring ill;
His torch extinct, his quiver useless hung,

His arrows idle, and his bow unstrung.
And yet, ye nymphs, beware, his eyes have charms:
And love that's naked, still is love in arms.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

From Venus' bower to Delia's lodge repairs
A virgin train complete with modest airs:
"Chaste Delia, grant our suit! oh shun the wood,
Nor stain this sacred lawn with savage blood.
Venus, O Delia, if she could persuade,
Would ask thy presence, might she ask a maid."
Here cheerful choirs for three auspicious nights
With songs prolong the pleasurable rites:
Her crowds in measures lightly decent move;
Or seek by pairs the covert of the grove,
Where meeting greens for arbours arch above,
And mingling flowerets strew the scenes of love.
Here dancing Ceres shakes her golden sheaves;
Here Bacchus revels, deckt with viny leaves;
Here wit's enchanting god, in laurel crown'd,
Wakes all the ravish'd hours with silver sound.
Ye fields, ye forests, own Dione's reign,
And Delia, huntress Delia, shun the plain.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved now love the more.

Gay with the bloom of all her opening year,
The Queen at Hybla bids her throne appear,
And there presides; and there the fav'rite band,
Her smiling Graces, share the great command.
Now, beauteous Hybla! dress thy flowery beds
With all the pride the lavish season sheds;
Now all thy colours, all thy fragrance yield,
And rival Enna's aromatic field.

To fill the presence of the gentle court
From every quarter rural Nymphs resort,
From woods, from mountains, from these humble vales,
From waters curling with the wanton gales.
Pleased with the joyful train, the laughing Queen
In circles seats them round the bank of green;
And, "lovely girls," she whispers, "guard your hearts;
My boy, though stript of arms, abounds in arts."

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

Let tender grass in shaded alleys spread;
Let early flowers erect their painted head;
Tomorrow's glory be tomorrow seen;
That day old Ether wedded Earth in green.
The vernal father bade the spring appear,
In clouds he coupled to produce the year;
The sap descending o'er her bosom ran,
And all the various sorts of soul began
By wheels unknown to sight, by secret veins
Distilling life; the fruitful goddess reigns
Through all the lovely realms of native day,
Through all the circled land and circling sea;
With fertile seed she fill'd the pervious earth,
And ever fix'd the mystic ways of birth.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

'Twas she, the parent, to the Latian shore
Through various dangers Troy's remainder bore.
She won Lavinia for her warlike son,
And winning her, the Latian empire won.
She gave to Mars the maid whose honour'd womb
Swell'd with the founder of immortal Rome.
Decoy'd by shows the Sabine dames she led,

And taught our vigorous youth the means to wed.
Hence sprung the Romans, hence the race divine
Through which great Caesar draws his Julian line.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

In rural seats the soul of pleasure reigns;
The love of Beauty fills the rural scenes;
Ev'n Love (if fame the truth of Love declare)
Drew first the breathings of a rural air,
Some pleasing meadow pregnant Beauty prest,
She laid her infant on its bowery breast;
From nature's sweets he supp'd the fragrant dew,
He smiled, he kiss'd them, and by kissing grew.

Let those love now, who never loved before;
And those who always loved, now love the more.

Now bulls o'er stalks of broom extend their sides,
Secure of favours from their lowing brides.
Now stately rams their fleecy consorts lead,
Who bleating follow through the wand'ring shade.
And now the goddess bids the birds appear,
Raise all their music, and salute the year;
Then deep the swan begins, and deep the song
Runs o'er the water where he sails along;
While Philomela tunes a treble strain,
And from the poplar charms the list'ning plain.
We fancy love exprest at every note;
It melts, it warbles in her liquid throat.
Of barbarous Tereus she complains no more,
But sings for pleasure, as for grief before.
And still her graces rise, her airs extend,
And all is silence till the siren end.
How long in coming is my lovely spring?
And when shall I, and when the swallow sing?

Sweet Philomela, cease;—or here I sit,
And silent lose my rapturous hour of wit.
'Tis gone; the fit retires, the flames decay;
My tuneful Phoebus flies averse away.
His own Amyclae thus, as stories run,
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Let those love now, who never loved before,
And those who always loved, now love the more.

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